THE COMMONWEAL

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THE PERFECT HANDSHAKE

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD did not come and conquer. He arrived in the wake of a conquest, long since made by public opinion in the United States and England, and he takes on significance as the herald of a new peace. It is more than usually interesting to observe the stages by which the position now arrived at was reached. But it is still more important to discern, if one can, whether that advance means a substantial forward movement of political energies as a whole to a more rational conception of society, or whether it is merely the action of a few persons who have been able to place their aspirations upon paper. The joint statement issued by President Hoover and Prime Minister MacDonald declares that "in a new and reinforced sense the two governments not only declare that war between them is unthinkable but that distrusts and suspicions arising from doubts and fears which may have been justified before the peace pact must now cease to influence national policy." More concretely expressed, no "fear" bred of older international situations now leads either nation to oppose armament parity. No argument about privileges on the high seas is important, because it is "inconceivable" that such an argument could lead to conflict.

Inconceivable or not, history raises not a few pertinent queries. During the great war, which started thinking about international harmony, the government of the United States assented to the British demand for control of shipping. Though many an argument grew out of the situation, Washington did not push its protest far enough to provoke hostilities. Part of this restraint was undoubtedly due to the circumstance that Washington was inclined to favor the Allied cause, but naval tradition also had its effect. What is the situation at present? Granted the hypothesis that a similar war might break out, what stand would be taken by the English? To expect that the attitude of Washington would always be a little less than neutral would be to assume the existence of a tacit friendly understanding—not an alliance but an arrangement. We believe that the American people wish to make no such commitments. May it then be supposed that the old tradition whereby Britain was entitled to a lion's share of shipping control has ceased to be effective? This is a dangerous question, but it is precisely the one which needs answering if all doubts and fears are really to vanish.

It may be admitted offhand that public opinion in

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the United States, which has fervently underwritten the hope expressed in the Kellogg treaties, will attempt to the best of its ability to avoid any situation leading to war. But one strong root from which that opinion derives strength is the conviction that "international entanglements" have brought, and may again bring, the country into conflict. And therefore we believe it essential to the peace movement that the precise extent of our national naval independence be set forth clearly as soon as possible. Ending competitive building is, true enough, one part of the answer. A British public consciousness willing to maintain naval parity is not bent upon ruling the waves. And Mr. MacDonald, influenced by sentiment upon which he must rely for the continuance of his party in power, is clearly the advocate of "freedom of the seas" in every practical form. If only the world can manage now to be a little more frank, a little more courageous, in bringing hidden issues into the open! The Kellogg treaties banning war mean nothing unless the causes of war are sincerely borne in mind.

Other issues are involved, of course. The United States will attend the coming armament conference fully aware that its peace is not endangered by any immediately conceivable "balance of power." Such happy knowledge is, unfortunately, withheld from France and Italy. To both these countries aloofness from international entanglements is out of the question. For both the alignment of military and economic energies on the continent is of sovereign importance. The obvious inference is that France and Italy need to be viewed not as countries morally inferior to the very noble lands which have recently permitted their governing executives to issue a joint peace statement, but rather as countries beset with political problems not yet solved. To aid in finding that solution is both an opportunity and an obligation. America looks confidently to its representatives, sure that they will possess tact as well as good intentions.

WEEK BY WEEK

PERSISTENT rumors to the effect that a pact is soon to be signed between the Vatican and the Soviet Union have been followed by equally persistent and more official denials. The Reverend Edmund A. Walsh, S.J., who knows the situation well, appears to have settled the matter by declaring: "It is clear that the attitude of the Holy See toward the present Soviet government has not changed in any respect and cannot be expected to change until the fundamental and inalienable rights of Catholics in Russia are respected by the Soviet Union. Far from showing any tendency to mitigate its persecution of religion, the Moscow government, during the past twelve months, has reasserted its hostile intent by new discriminatory legislation, by enlarging the activities of its anti-religious department, by arbitrary imprisonment of Catholic dignitaries, such as Bishop Sloskan, and by generally renewed assaults on all churches. The Catholic Church seeks neither privilege nor preferred status in Russia but only common justice and the freedom now recognized and accorded her by all other civilized nations as indispensable for her spiritual mission." This statement is in perfect accord with repeated declarations emanating, at least semi-officially, from the Vatican itself.

Sovietism and the Holy See

WHILE we do not agree with all the inferences in the article on Mexican immigrants which Mr. Glenn E. Hoover contributes to the current number of Foreign Affairs, we are quite ready to assert that the paper merits careful reading as the most effective treatment of an important subject we have seen. That the peon normally enters the United States illegally and free of charge; that he hires out through an employment agency as a seasonal laborer in some specialized agricultural pursuit, or as a railroad hand; that he veers between deplorable living conditions and a startling readiness to avail himself of community help; that he does stay here and does mingle his blood with that of the dominant racial groups—these are facts, really familiar facts, which Mr. Hoover summarizes skilfully. Of course he says nothing about the vast spiritual problem which the Mexican immigrant situation creates for the Catholic Church, and which has not yet been even adequately estimated. It is significant that our author arrives at the following conclusion: "It is impossible to predict what form of restriction will be applied to Mexican immigration, but it seems certain that restriction of some sort must come. Approximately one out of fifteen of the present generation of Mexicans has left his homeland for the United States. More Indians have crossed the southern border in one year than lived in the entire territory of New England at the time of the Plymouth settlement. This movement, the greatest Indian migration of all time, will have to be curtailed for the same reasons that dictated the Immigration Act of 1924."

Mexican Immigrant Workers

NEITHER the heats of summer nor the chill winds of debate have availed the Senate anything in so far as the tariff is concerned. It may be cheerfully admitted that the diverse new rate increases are not of central importance at the Capitol, even though they might ultimately become most interesting to consumers. The issue at stake—the flexible provision amendment—has afforded a magnificent opportunity to test the President's strength. To date the forces of opposition have triumphed, but not without uneasiness of heart. It is a brave man who will venture to predict that the existing coalition of Democrats and disaffected Republicans can maintain the necessary united front. Meanwhile at least one

Tariff Doldrums

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advance has been made. Senator Vandenberg exposed the iniquities of antiquities—the presence of ultra-modern worm-holes in table legs, the abundant supply of Louis Quatorze varnish, the assumed senility of twentieth-century teacups. And his confrères agreed that all antiques which cannot show a birth certificate antedating 1800 should be taxed 50 percent of their value upon arrival here. It is an excellent suggestion. A still better one would be to impose a 100 percent tax. Actuated by bitter experience, we should gladly advocate even a 1,000 percent tax. But one simply can't have everything.

Promoting Prohibition

AN INTERESTING triple play in the current prohibition spectacle involves the Philadelphia Circuit Court of Appeals, Senator Sheppard and Congress. The judiciary having decided that the buyer in a liquor transportation case cannot be found guilty, Senator Sheppard is drafting a bill designed to place the aforementioned buyer in jail. So far the bulk of the supporting applause has come from Bishop James Cannon, who avers that "the time has come to put the buyer and seller on exactly the same footing before the law—as equally hostile to the great purpose of the Eighteenth Amendment." The part of Cassandra has meanwhile fallen to Senator Hawes of Missouri, who pointed out the circumstance that 149,000 cases are now pending in the federal courts, that the penitentiaries are a little like Emporia, Kansas, on circus day, and that the proposed law "would put another army of millions of men and women in the lawless class." For obvious reasons, we hope that this negative argument will prevail. There is, however, the interesting chance that the law may be passed, declared unconstitutional, and thereupon presented to the country as a proposed amendment. The resultant referendum might then provide a real opportunity to test the nation's real sentiment regarding Volsteadism.

The Long Story of Art

ONE is glad to see that the German correspondent of the New York Times Book Review has recently interrupted a lengthy search for something to write about by commenting discreetly upon the History of Art which the Propylaen Verlag of Berlin is gradually bringing nearer its conclusion. The sixteen published volumes of this series constitute, to our way of thinking, the most valuable general work in the field, and are likewise a fine testimonial to the enterprise of greatly handicapped German editors. Here are large but nevertheless relatively inexpensive books, which adhere to a distinctive method of presentation. One period is taken as the subject-matter for each volume. The informative text, curtailed to reasonable limits, is entrusted to a competent authority who is usually also a fairly tolerable writer. Then there is added a truly remarkable corpus of illustrative material, sufficing to initiate all but the unwilling into the genetic and other characteristics of an art. To everyone interested in such books, the series may be warmly recommended. It seems eminently worth stressing the point that not all contemporary German literature is dangling between Eros and a thoroughly dyspeptic Mars.

The Colorado Robin Hood

CHARGED in the federal court of New York with using the mails to defraud, Mr. Charles Waggoner of Telluride, Colorado, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to Atlanta penitentiary for fifteen years. Mr. Waggoner's story was that money was needed in order to save his bank at Telluride from ruin, and that to protect the depositors who had trusted him, he swindled the rich eastern banks. With the Court's conviction that the Robin Hood motive "is highly improbable" no one will quarrel. Probable or not, it had no bearing on the case. Mr. Waggoner was charged with fraud, and the benevolence of his intent should not properly have influenced a decision. It is the size of the sentence imposed on him which will cause many of us to scratch our heads. Mr. Waggoner defrauded six New York banks out of $500,000; the Clarke brothers defrauded 25,000 people out of nearly $5,000,000 and their separate sentences aggregate less than Mr. Waggoner's fifteen years. Here, certainly, is something to remember: that it is the greater crime to steal the tithe than the whole, from the few than from the many, and from the rich than from those who can less afford it.

Our Liquor Warehouse

THERE seems to be almost as much disagreement in this country about the effectiveness of Canada's liquor control system as there is about the merits of prohibition. In the October issue of Current History, for instance, the Reverend Alfred Edward Cooke of Denver declares that drinking and crime are increasing in Canada, while Professor Carleton Stanley of McGill University finds that temperance is being promoted. Amid such diversity of opinion, it would seem as superfluous to hear the word of the Association against the Prohibition Amendment as that of the Anti-saloon League. Yet there are several statements in the report of the Association's recent survey which cannot well be disputed. One is that the $70,000,000 which Canada collects annually from the liquor traffic, and which is set aside for roads, schools and charities, would, under prohibition, all go toward relieving the suffering bootleggers. No one can quarrel with that. Another is that part of the revenue comes from liquor which will ultimately be sold and consumed in the United States. There will be no disagreements here. And yet, supposing that we are all mistaken about the amount of Canadian liquor drunk by Americans, supposing that all the liquor made in Canada or imported from abroad is consumed by

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Canadians, even so the per capita consumption among them has declined more than one-half since 1912.

THE new Manichee, says Mr. Chesterton in a recent article in America, knows much less about his own first principles than the old Manichee, but he can be found acting on them just as consistently. For instance, it is he whom we occasionally hear saying "that true Christianity must not be sacramental, because it must be purely spiritual. . . . All that he calls good is mind as distinct from matter, or even in antagonism to matter. . . . He detests as a sort of degradation all connection with coarse and concrete things; both the connection that a Catholic calls healthy and that which he calls sinful." It is not amiss to remind ourselves of a further application of these facts which Mr. Chesterton might well have made. Part of the specifically religious impulse which gives such tremendous strength to the defense of prohibition is beyond doubt this same Manichaean hatred and suspicion of matter. In so far as rational discussion of the subject is impossible, this is the element that makes it so. The economic and social theories clustering around the difficult question of drink can be debated and perhaps compromised; a mystical fear of drink as drink will go on operating as an instinct even after its superstructure of theory has been knocked over. Of course the hope is that eventually it, too, may be made to yield; but it will not yield to the oblique arguments which assume it to be a mere social doctrine. It is a piece of the lurid metaphysic of the Two Kingdoms. As such it must be met and mastered, if a sane belief in licit enjoyment and voluntary self-discipline is ever to replace the present dispensation.

Manes Up-to-Date

THOUGH the great majority of books are published most unwillingly for only a few, occasional volumes proudly appeal to a limited audience. Somehow one rejoices over this restriction, which indicates that more or less reclusive learning still has a measure of control over materials. Next month, for instance, the Mediaeval Academy of America will bring out two works of more than usual erudition. Professor Edward Kennard Rand's Survey of the Manuscripts of Tours will throw light from an important source upon the processes of mediaeval publishing. The subject is of interest to those who care about the agencies of civilization in the past, as well as to all who realize that manuscript-making embodies definite art counsel for the present generation. Another part of the same field is envisaged by Professor Charles Henry Beeson's edition of a copy of Cicero's De Oratore, as written out and revised by the abbot of Ferrières during the ninth century. Old tomes, indeed. But to such as these one must turn for concrete information regarding the intellectual pursuits of our ancestors—pursuits so fascinating because they have, in this way or that, influenced all of us. It is a pleasure to reflect that publishing of this sort can now be undertaken enthusiastically in the United States, which even fifty years ago fancied that the "dark ages" belonged to the more ferocious type of unicorn.

Mediaeval Books in America

THE city resident has for years endured without much complaint the thunders and grumblings that are the voice of the streets at night, deeming this more conducive to repose, at any rate, than the noises of the country. Strangely enough, it is the addition of music to the harsh sounds of wheels and motors that has now driven him to protest. The spread of the radio loud speaker has at last made him aware of all that his ears have been suffering; it is directly responsible for the anti-noise campaign which has developed such a numerous and notable following of late. How it can succeed we do not know: the only way to silence street cars and automobiles is to abolish them, and the only way to silence a loud speaker is to hit it with an ax. Nevertheless this campaign, which might mean so much for the general welfare, promoting both health and happiness, has our support. It is one important line of attack in what future historians will look upon as the great lost cause of our time.

The Voice of the City

THE latest voice to be raised against the movies is the distinguished voice of Father Martindale. His strictures (which are to be found in the current number of Studies) will probably be extensively disagreed with; but they have the reality and effectiveness that go with first-hand knowledge and the wish to be scrupulously fair. Father Martindale confesses that, on the rare occasions when he attends the movies, he attends "with terrific enjoyment." He grants (what certain educators are not willing to grant) that the movies are useful in schools "for helping children's imaginations to lay hold of what they could often not otherwise understand or realize; geography, science, natural history." He finds that "films *can* be extremely beautiful, amusing and interesting." But in spite of these concessions, he draws up an impressive indictment against the representative film. Its effect, he finds, "is bad, and it so acts upon human minds as to render improvement difficult." It is the enemy of thought, speech and memory. It "weakens the outworks of virtue" and debauches the will. It destroys thrift. Finally, it either alienates or "decivilizes" the Oriental, in whose life it is taking an increasingly important place.

Do Movie Fans Think?

THUS baldly itemized, his argument may sound too sweeping for conviction. Perhaps it is too sweeping. But at least one of its charges is undeniably sound. The movies do offer a substitute for thinking, which fact is probably the basis for their universal appeal.

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All forms of entertainment, of course, ease the burden of the actual in this way to a greater or less extent. But aside from this common purpose of all entertainment, and from the question of the quality of the entertainment purveyed by the usual film, it is true that the mere mechanical circumstances of film projection make intellectual stimulation virtually impossible. The hypnotic contrast of darkness and light, the dazing magic of continuity which excludes the intervals for mental breathing demanded by the rhythms of normal existence, induce the type of attention in which both the critical and the contemplative powers are completely relaxed. This being true, it must automatically be granted to Father Martindale that the "assault upon thinking" involves an assault upon speech and memory. That morals and will power are specifically weakened is more debatable—but mainly for this very reason. The intellectual unreality of the experience probably unfits it to be a first-rate agent of moral degeneration. But, equally, it unfits it for any sort of tonic or strengthening function. The most to be hoped for, generally speaking, is neutrality—surely a disturbing fact in view of the devotion of a large part of the leisure of a large part of western humanity to the films.

IN THE United States, the months from December to March are ideal as winters go. It is our springs which fail us—short, sloppy and treacherous; it is our summers which are intemperate. And yet most of us spare our leisure time for summer only—it is then we go abroad to look upon the land. On the basis of the Department of the Interior's figures for previous years, it is estimated that almost three million people entered our national parks during the summer months just past. We have seventeen national parks in this country, in area larger than the state of Massachusetts, and yet it is a safe bet that for the number of people who make use of them in winter, the total acreage might as well be the size of Boston County. It is strange that in a country where more than half of the inhabitants expect a five months' winter, so little attention should have been given to making the best of it, and so much time should be spent twiddling thumbs in front of radiators and complaining of the season. We are for a system which will bar all summer visitors to our northern national parks unless they sign an agreement to make a winter visit at least once in five years.

Acceptance of Winter

THE settlement of the truck drivers' strike that had threatened New York City with a famine of fresh fruits and vegetables, presents some unsatisfactory features. The drivers were given a merited raise in pay and a shortened work-day; but the further concession that only trucks operated by members of the Market Truckmen's Association can deliver to the commission houses is arbitrary and burdensome both to grower and consumer. Under this arrangement the farmer, who has adopted long-distance automobile hauling to shorten the chain of distribution, will find another link added, since he will be compelled to transfer his produce in New York City, or its environs, to one of the accredited trucks. New York City could ill afford a protracted strike which would drastically curtail the supply of necessary foodstuffs but it can take little satisfaction that this particular one was avoided by such a compromise. Nevertheless there is hope that the excluding term of the compact between the truck owners and commission merchants will be set aside by the action of Commissioner Byrne A. Pyrke of the State Department of Agriculture and Markets. He has declared his intention of investigating the situation; it is to be hoped that he will be given full coöperation.

Middlemen Triumphant

MR. EDSEL FORD has answered a question which from time to time has bothered us no end. We have wanted to know what goes on when the great financiers, industrialists, merchants and so forth call upon the President of the United States: what they find to talk about, outside of the weather, and their pleasure at meeting. Of course the newspapers frequently print long interviews with men who have just come from the President's office, but too often these interviews read like speeches prepared the night before. The marks of reality are not upon them. Mr. Ford, the lesser, however, has given us an account of his recent visit to the President which looks like the genuine article. The President asked him how the automobile business is getting on. "I told the President," said Mr. Ford, "that the outlook for the automobile industry is very good." How reasonable this all seems. The President asks you courteously about the progress of your business, and you, in turn, ask him about his. "Is there any future for the Presidency, do you think?" He answers, perhaps, that the outlook is very, very good. That would be it, of course.

Behind the Scenes

THE problem of compulsory chapel is a real one in many of our colleges. They remain formally sectarian in accordance with the terms of their foundations, and yet are in actuality so non-sectarian that the requirement of daily or weekly religious attendance loses the authority of that corporate conviction which is necessary to maintain it at any level of fruitfulness and reality. Princeton's current attempt to solve the problem is interesting—though not, perhaps, as interesting as the student complaint which prompted it: "There has not been sufficient opportunity to learn a religion in the university chapel. . . . There have been too many speakers on different subjects, leaving no impression of continuity." In response to this excellent, and surely significant,

Princeton's New Plan

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piece of criticism, a number of discussion groups have been formed which may be attended instead of the chapel exercises. In them, doctrines and perplexities will be canvassed informally, under the leadership, respectively, of Dean Wicks, Professor H. Alexander Smith and Professor Paul Elmer More. How much essential religion will accrue to each student as a result cannot, of course, be determined beforehand. But the groups will at least be the gainers by having partaken in candid discussion under the direction of men who are cultured, honest and humane. It will probably prove to be a step beyond the alternative system, of trying to unite students of diverse forms of faith, and perhaps of none, in one type of religious service.

SAFETY ALOFT

RECENT statistics furnished by the British Board of Trade show that ships are safer than the railroad, the airplane or the automobile. This, of course, is merely a confirmation of other surveys which have been made in the past twenty years. There is a good reason for it: the seas are free of obstacles, and there is no congestion. For the same reason, the airplane should some day be safer than any form of land travel, at least safer than the automobile. Adequate meteorological service must come first, of course, and devices along the lines of the autogiro which will obviate landing difficulties, and the danger consequent upon motor troubles. Even today, outside of stunt and experimental flying, the airplane is reasonably safe. British commercial planes, for instance, have flown 4,458,000 miles during the past five years, carried 113,012 passengers safely, had only two accidents and fifteen deaths. Over here the record is not so remarkable; airplane accidents are on the increase, but they are increasing only one-tenth as rapidly as operations are expanding.

The really encouraging promise for the future of aeronautics is that there is no longer any confusion about what must be done to insure the maximum safety. There is no need for wild experimenting, for hit-or-miss innovations. Three instruments will solve almost all of the airplane's problems, and they are now being developed: the radio beam, which will keep a pilot true on his course, bring him to his destination through darkness and fog, and enable him to land safely even when he cannot see the ground; an automatic pilot which will keep the plane level without any attention from the aviator, and a new altimeter which will show altitude above the ground instead of above sea-level, obviating the danger of flying into hilltops. When these things are finally perfected, and when all inland cities are provided with suitable landing fields, the plane should be approximately as safe as a ship at sea.

But it is otherwise with the automobile. No one has any clear idea of what can be done to keep the roads and streets safe for either the pedestrian or the motorist. No radio beam will keep a driver from crashing into a telephone pole, and no automatic device will stop him from trying to beat a train to the crossing. He will drive too fast in fog and on slippery pavements, despite warnings; and he will charge full speed at a pedestrian trusting that Providence and his brakes will prevent a tragedy if the walker should stumble or fall. Though a thousand are killed each year in New York, and more than half as many in Chicago, nothing can be done about it. Speed regulations which do not promise much in the first place are tried because nothing better offers. If the limit is high, nothing has been gained, if it is low enough for safety, it will be broken. Limit the speed at which an automobile can travel to an absolutely safe mark, and you do away with all of its advantages.

How speed will ever become consistent with safety we do not know. It is a problem for engineers. Finding engineers equal to it has long been a task of leading industrialists. The right men have been found in other situations. No doubt they will be found in this.

ORGANIZED WOMANHOOD

OF THE especial perils to which women are exposed, none is perhaps so impressive now as want of guidance. It is fairly plain that political, educational and industrial leadership is destined to remain largely in the hands of men; that these are likely to regard definitely feminine problems with a shrug of the shoulders; and that women themselves may, ultimately, see the world in distorted perspective. Though what used to be called "feminism" is now commonly interpreted in the language of economics, enough of it spills over to color the main currents of civilization. It is somehow easier, in these days, for a "strong personality" to leave an impression with women than with men; and since a goodly number of "strong personalities" happen to be smart, agnostic and suggestively epicurean, feminine audiences have been known to wax rampantly apostolic for ideas which, a generation ago, would have sent a lady to bed with a hot compress and a cup of sassafras tea. The supreme ability of woman to reflect dominant trends and ideas is probably no greater than it ever was, but widening circles of activity carry her farther from the primordial influences of church and home.

Since this tendency is rooted in varied social and individual necessities, it cannot well be dubbed deplorable. Christianity, which emancipated woman, set no arbitrary limits to her development; but of course a social world basically agricultural in character could afford no such ventures in independence as are now normal in our urban universe. The task ahead of us, then, is to make this new freedom genuinely emancipatory—to see, on the one hand, that industrialized activity does not crush woman or treat her with poisonous injustice, and to curtail, on the other hand, the excesses of irresponsibility. Blessings which the Church has conferred upon women need to abide, but we have also

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a need for new blessings upon the conditions of the age.

The vehicle through which they may be expressed is manifestly public opinion. This is now everywhere the chief leverage of social betterment. Catholicism has turned to it confidently, the papal plea for Catholic Action being fundamentally a conviction that to think with the Church—sentire cum ecclesia—is the source from which religious influence upon modern life must be derived. Morality and belief cannot any longer be enjoined by force of any kind. Humanity turns now to the corporate spirit for guidance. How then can public opinion be Christianized, or how can the habit of "thinking with the Church" be instilled? No doubt the larger urges of civilization are independent of sex and other dividing factors. But to a far greater extent than is usually realized, the effective marshaling of public opinion does depend upon recognition of sex. The interests which women share in common are real inducements to thought and action in common. Often the very issues which men ignore are those which stir the feminine soul.

Of all this no better proof could be asked than the growth of the National Council of Catholic Women. Beginning modestly a decade ago, the organization had to appeal to very many who were sincerely in doubt as to whether anything beyond the fireside could properly be of feminine concern. There existed a real prejudice against the club woman, in whom thousands saw merely a creature with time on her hands—even a frightful gadabout whose ceilings bristled with cobwebs and whose Pomeranians were not even well trained. Nevertheless the Council lived on because it was based upon a really vital idea. It saw that a thousand and one aspects of social work were summoning the Catholic conscience, and more specifically the feminine conscience. It knew that several redemptive professions, dedicated to the salvage of the unfortunate and the upbuilding of disrupted families, were normally taking the place of older institutionalized endeavor. Bowing to the principle that retreat from the world is commendable only when it does not involve running away from the world, the Council came to grips with its first social program.

One is, however, astounded to notice the extent to which the organization has grown. In some states the number of women enrolled is gradually pushing on toward a hundred thousand, and it has not been difficult to find aggressive leaders. The recent convention in Washington was, perhaps, the most successful Catholic public meeting ever held in the United States. It had, first of all, the advantage of a series of thoughtful addresses, some of which evoked lively comment. (And here one may assert parenthetically that, regardless of the value of the repartee which Father Ryan's address on "equal rights" occasioned, it was immensely valuable because it showed that habits of discussion are forming in realms where all used to be either acceptance or sleep.) Beyond that were currents of experience and reflection which, mingling in a variety of meetings, became powerful agents of adult education. The resolutions adopted by the convention are by no means an exhaustive formula for its achievement. They represent a mere handful of easily stated principles, designed to carry a little further that endeavor to think with the Church which associates the Council with the larger purposes of Catholic Action. It is refreshing to know that all was not a simple routine of statement and applause—that here, at last, one confronted minds sharpened and enlarged by the experience of working in common for important purposes.

All of us sincerely hope that nothing will dampen the ardor of the Council or hamper its remarkable progress. It seems to us quite the finest response to the recent appeals of the Holy Father to the laity which has yet been given in America. Part of this success is attributable to the circumstance that the Council has quite definitely circumscribed its activity. Interested in a program of social action, it has never drifted far away from such practical tasks as the fostering of the School of Social Service, which remains in a sense the nucleus of its activity. And yet one knows that, in the long run, a widening of aims and concerns must follow. Now that women in the United States form the sounding-board toward which almost all cultural speech is directed, it is impossible to sever any hope for a distinctively Catholic ministry to our civilization from the feminine audience. And even in the domain of religion, it seems apparent that practically all hope for a sturdier spiritual expression must rest upon the willingness of women to seek it out.

Doubtless such matters will take care of themselves in due time. The extent to which the American Catholic woman is "reaching out" seems to us eminently remarkable. An anecdote to establish this point may not be out of place. Recently a young lady came to this office in quest of advice. She had begun to take a course in current social theories, and soon found that her professor was almost entirely ignorant of Catholic tendencies and opinions. Nothing daunted, she set out to enlighten him—and incidentally the rest of the world; and she wanted to come upon still other publications, in English and foreign languages, which would serve to increase her information. Such effort is not to be expected of young men. Indeed, there are practical reasons why it ought not to be expected of young men. But if it redounds to the credit of woman, it also adds to the responsibility of woman. Let anybody who believes that short skirts, bobbed hair and "business" have ruined all femininity reflect. And if he is not sufficiently impressed by the evidence supplied by the National Council of Catholic Women, he may be glad to know that incidents such as the one set forth, which might be multiplied ad infinitum, are the sources whence the energies of that Council are recruited. It is a sad world, but it has its good points. The woman whom Christ once saved from the stoning rises perennially to thank Him for life, for labor and for love.

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ECONOMIC DISARMAMENT

By JOHN CARTER

Recent conversations between President Hoover and Prime Minister MacDonald have emphasized one set of solutions for the problem of war. Quite apart from these more political avenues to peace, the world is seeking a route through economic hostilities of varied kinds. Mr. Carter points out, in the following paper, that the tariff is the least important of these. His analysis of existing "economic discriminations" sets before the reader a number of difficulties with which modern statesmanship must reckon. Though the point of view taken is definitely American, we believe that it is also fair.—The Editors.

TEN years after the treaty of Versailles the world is gradually arriving at the conviction that ultimate disarmament can be made complete only by action in the economic sphere. Progress has been made in military and naval reduction and in political rapprochement. The Washington treaties and the present Anglo-American negotiations have brought about a notable abatement in the formerly inflammable field of naval competition. Navies now can be and are limited by international agreement. The League of Nations is slowly grinding out a general land, sea and air disarmament conference which is to extend the same principle to all branches of national defense. The Dawes plan, the Locarno treaties and the Young plan have modified the rigors of the Versailles settlement as they affect Germany. The cause of Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria has received sympathetic international attention. Turkey escaped completely from the treaty of Sèvres. Reparations and war debts have been settled on the basis of agreements freely entered into by the nations concerned.

Now it is becoming possible to approach the subject of economic disarmament. It is a great subject and one which will not easily lend itself to diplomatic solution. The forces of economic competition—unlike armaments and treaties—are not fully within the control of national governments. In some cases they actually do control those governments. Economic demobilization is not yet assured, though the Geneva convention abolishing import and export prohibitions is a step in that direction. The recommendations of the Economic Conference of 1927 for the reduction of tariffs have not yet been given any practical effect, although M. Briand's advocacy of a European economic union is in harmony with them. Nevertheless, the change which is coming over the spirit of the world's economic dream is casting a brighter light on the dark corners of economic competition. It is already apparent that economic nationalism is not enough for the world; economic imperialism is better, but still lacks the definition which could render it acceptable as an international formula; economic coöperation is timid, suspicious and partial, limiting itself to monopolistic price-fixing and marketing agreements between a few groups of industrial producers.

Even the approach to economic disarmament is clouded by political misapprehension. To most Europeans it would appear to mean tariff reduction by some other nation, especially by the United States. The very idea of European union is popularly entertained largely because it has been erroneously advertised as an answer to the "American invasion" or as a counter-attack upon American trade. Clearly, there is need for a more scientific approach to the subject, a technique of discussion which will disinfect it from the taint of economic particularism or political prejudice.

The most urgent economic need today, contrary to most appearances, is not in the field of practice but in that of theory. The psychological obstacles to economic coöperation are far higher than any tariffs; the political practices resulting from this psychology are far less significant than what produces them.

This is not to state that there is no need for reform in economic practice. There is. And this reform must be far wider than any tariff reduction ever proposed. The tariff in this country is, actually, the least important element in the situation. Being sui generis, covering a great unified continental market which produces both raw materials and manufactures in abundance, the American tariff has very little bearing in the field of European economy, where tariffs have split a continent into a couple of dozen water-tight compartments, in Asia where industrialism has just begun to transform economic life, or in Latin America where the tariff on exports is maintained as the best means of conserving raw materials and preventing absentee exploitation. Preoccupation with the American tariff has impeded the solution of entirely dissimilar tariff problems elsewhere.

There are other fields, less well advertised than tariffs, where national exclusiveness needs to be checked decisively if the world is to reach economic peace. Examples of this exclusiveness have been rife in the past decade, including the denial of voting rights to American stockholders in foreign corporations, the refusal to admit American companies to mineral rights in European possessions, the cancellation of existing rights and concessions by political action, the imposition of new legal systems subverting existing rights of ownership and development, the attempts to raise and control prices of essential raw materials, such as the now defunct British rubber restriction, the various camphor, coffee, sisal, potash, nitrate and silk controls, and the persistent tendency toward favoritism in respect to national shipping evinced by every maritime power. There is finally the great poser in the form of the Soviet monopoly of foreign trade.

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Another highly significant matter of economic discrimination is the matter of double taxation. In at least one powerful industrial nation, the fiscal system supports a practice under which foreign corporations are taxed not only upon their business in that country but on their business throughout the world.

Yet another field of discrimination, actual and potential, exists in the sphere of contingents, quotas and cartels—the numerical restriction of imports from any particular country without reference to existing supply and demand; the importation of articles for which there is a demand on condition that the importer buy or export a specified number of like articles, for which there is no corresponding demand, to the other country; the attempt to trustify and monopolize certain profitable fields of economic endeavor by international agreements arrived at through a process of political bargaining and motivated by political rather than economic considerations.

All these practices are, it may be freely admitted, essentially hang-overs from the war. The world has never known such economic exclusiveness as the war called forth in every belligerent nation. Blanket prohibitions of import and export, followed by relaxation to favor war policies, rationing, the pooling and apportionment of raw materials and shipping, blacklisting and blockade—there has never been anything like it. The machinery devised to impose these egotistical economics has been slow to disappear. Even more important, there is the persistence of the economic psychology engendered by the war.

This is the real barrier to world peace. Every nation has been schooled by the urgencies of warfare to regard its own resources as its exclusive weapons and to regard those of other nations with envy if they were allies, with fear if they were enemies. The economic history of the war is a record of envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness, as depressing to the theologian as it is numbing to the economist. And nations which got in the habit of considering economics in terms of survival will be slow to return to a view of economics in terms of mutual prosperity.

No nation, not even the most practical and most experienced, is immune from this vice. British trade with the Argentine has increased greatly since pre-war days; ours has increased still more. And there is great concern in British circles over this "set-back" to British trade, and an economic mission, headed by a distinguished diplomat, is dispatched to Buenos Aires to see what can be done about it. We ourselves are not guiltless of this psychological vice. When we read how the Japanese are developing Manchuria or how the Europeans are trying to undersell us in Latin America, our editorial pages go pit-a-pat. When we learn that foreign films and foreign automobiles are competing with ours in foreign markets, we become worried, instead of taking pleasure in Europe's economic revival. When we read of Europe's economic union we are apt to wonder whether it is aimed at us, in defiance of the clearly established economic principle that the prosperity of one part of the world means greater prosperity in the rest of the world.

The envy of another nation's prosperity is, perhaps, the worst of all the morbid symptoms in current economic thought. Being the most prosperous nation in the world—on paper, at least—we are more or less immune from this disease, but are apt to fall into the contrary vice of glorifying ourselves on that account. If, however, Japan had emerged from the world war as the great financial and industrial nation, even if we maintained our present prosperity, would we not, somehow, have felt that the Japanese had taken something that belonged to us?

It is difficult to see how Europe could have been restored to economic order and productive activity, without the aid of American prosperity. Yet we see France, which today has the largest coal and iron supplies in Europe, where there is virtually no unemployment and where the tenacious industry of a great peasant race has repaired the agricultural damages of the war, constantly perturbed by the spectre of American wealth. Germany, defeated in the greatest war of modern times, finds herself ten years later with the finest industrial plant in Europe, with unimpaired credit, building the world's best airships and steamers, with a small national debt and a relatively small reparations debt; yet she considers herself very harshly used. Great Britain, with a quarter of the world in fee, gets wrought up over American foreign investments much smaller than her own pre-war stake in the world, fights the American oil companies which helped her win the war, and originates the term of "Uncle Shylock" at the very time the Federal Reserve is helping the Bank of England resume gold payments. It would be possible to go over every country in the world—including our own—and disclose examples of this primitive inconsistency which regards the welfare of the others as a personal injury and another's profit as a personal loss.

This—the moral obstacle to economic peace—is the enemy which must be destroyed before the world can recover its health and before international society can recover its sanity on the basis of a few simple, wholesome economic ideas. These ideas can be boiled down to the principle that what is for the good of one is for the good of all, where now one nation's meat is frankly regarded as another nation's poison. In moral terms, the matter resolves itself into a practical admission of Christian principles in the business field. To reëducate the nations along these lines, however, will require more than a mere decade of a peace which—to quote the gibe of 1919—passed understanding even at the time it was signed. But that a real peace can come is the conviction of statesmen as well as of moralists, of politicians as well as economists, if the people will let them bring it to pass in the sphere where wars are bred—in the unrestrained and irresponsible clashes of competitive economic groups.

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THE EXPERTS LOOK AT UNEMPLOYMENT

II. A SHORTER WORK PERIOD

By JOHN A. RYAN

WHILE higher wages for the majority of the laboring class is the primary and direct solution of the problem of chronic or technological unemployment, it is not the only solution. There is an important secondary remedy which would reinforce higher wages and promote a better social order than that which results from the development of new wants. This secondary remedy is a shorter work-day or a shorter work-week, or both. The shorter work-day is sometimes advocated on the ground that it results in as large a production per capita as a longer day. In any industry where this would happen, the shorter work-day would obviously fail to reduce unemployment. What is needed is increased demand for labor, not the ability of labor to turn out more goods in a given number of hours. We should frankly realize that the problem is not one of more productive power but of better distribution of purchasing power. With a shorter work-day or work-week, a given demand for goods would require more laborers, thus decreasing unemployment.

Two situations may be conceived. In the first, labor has shorter hours while the machinery and plants are operated full time; in the second, the plant and the employees, are active during a shorter day or a smaller number of days per week. The choice between these methods in any industry would be determined by the amount of demand for its products. At present the building trades in some cities are on a five-day-week basis because there is not sufficient demand to require operation for six days. On the other hand, the Ford automobile factory is busy six days in the week, although none of the employees works more than five. This arrangement can easily be substituted for the first whenever the demand warrants the larger use of machinery and plant. Full time for machinery and reduced time for the workers is evidently the more desirable arrangement, for it means not only more workers employed but a more economical use of capital. For example, a plant might be operated for twelve hours a day, six days in the week, and yet employ no laborer for more than six hours per day or five days per week.

The immediate effect of each of these arrangements would be to increase employment. Increased employment would increase the total amount of wages received, not only because more workers would be employed, but because the greater demand for labor would keep wage rates above what they would have been in the absence of increased employment. The increased wages would provide increased purchasing power for the products of many industries, thereby extending further the demand for labor. The order of events would be directly contrary to that set in motion when men are thrown out of work.

The objection that the same or higher wages could not be paid for producing a smaller or the same amount of goods has been dealt with in a preceding paragraph. After all, wages are the money equivalent of goods; if the goods can be produced, their wage equivalent will be potentially available. No competent person doubts that our industries are capable of producing the required volume of goods. The only difficulty is to get into operation the process of converting the goods into wages. The shorter work period for labor seems to provide an effective method.

Indeed, the movement toward this goal is already well under way. The average working time per week per employee in factories decreased 15 percent between 1900 and 1923. In the last two years considerable progress has been made toward the introduction of the five-day week. President Green of the American Federation of Labor recently estimated the number of men who have obtained the five-day week at 500,000. These workers are found chiefly in the building trades, the printing trades, foundries and machine shops, the clothing industries and the automobile industry. In all probability the movement can be extended more rapidly than the movement for higher wages to the underpaid.

As stated in a previous paragraph, the shorter work period "would promote a better social order than that which results from the development of new wants." On the one hand, it would provide the laboring classes with greater leisure and thus make possible the development of a higher intellectual and moral life; on the other hand, it would tend to retard the invention of new luxuries. To be sure, the increased leisure would not immediately be all utilized for intellectual and moral improvement. In all probability the greater part of it would, for a considerable time, be spent uselessly, if not foolishly. However, that is not an argument against the proposal. Men must first get leisure before they can learn to use it wisely. The latter is a problem of education which we have no right to assume is insoluble. The shorter work period would check or retard the production of new luxuries because the workers' increased demand for necessities and comforts would tend to keep capital fully employed in industries that are already established. Since production is justified only as a means to rational and beneficial consumption, it ought to be so organized as to yield the maximum of the good life for all. The elementary necessities and comforts and the material conditions of reasonable leisure and progressive mental

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and moral development ought to be placed within the reach of all the people, while the supply of useful and harmful luxuries should be kept down to a minimum. Of course, a shorter work period would not entirely prevent the production of luxuries. A vast amount of them would still be demanded by the possessors of unusually large purchasing power. The quantity turned out, however, and the proportion of productive energy thus engaged, would be considerably reduced, while the proportion of productive power used to meet the rational needs of the masses would be considerably greater than is the case in our present arrangements. This would be an immense gain for the good life.

Unfortunately, certain statements of the Committee on Recent Economic Changes tend to endorse the contrary doctrine. By suggestion and by implication they convey the idea that national prosperity and national welfare are dependent upon the indefinite expansion of human wants and the indefinite multiplication of luxuries. In the following section of an editorial by George Russell in the Irish Statesman, this construction is unhesitatingly put upon the Committee's language:

> There is an interesting passage in the Report of the Committee on Recent Economic Changes, of which President Hoover is chairman. It speaks of the reaching out for luxuries which make possible the expansion of new industries, and says that the United States has only touched the fringes of its potentialities. Wants, it declares, are insatiable, and one want satisfied makes room for another, and economically there is a boundless field for development. The report seems to suggest that material prosperity is largely based on the limitless desires of humanity for pleasure and luxury, that no great prosperity can be based merely upon the satisfaction of the primary needs for food, shelter and clothing. It suggests that if people are encouraged to have extravagant desires for luxury they will work for these and multitudes of people will be given employment, while the Spartan country will always be poor, however virtuous its people may be.

For the sake of the intellectual, not to say the moral, reputations of the Committee on Recent Economic Changes, let us hope that this interpretation and inference will turn out to have been unforeseen and unintended, however necessarily it may follow according to the strict processes of logic. Charity constrains us to give the Committee the benefit of the doubt. Charity constrains us to assume that on account of their great appreciation of our recent industrial progress and their preoccupation with "prosperity," the members of the Committee failed to perceive the false and disagreeable implications of their loose talk about "insatiable wants." Let us charitably assume that they did not mean to say that genuine prosperity "is largely based on the limitless desires of humanity for pleasure and luxury." Let us charitably assume that they had no intention of identifying this conception of prosperity with industrial sanity, social well-being or desirable human life. Moreover, we will charitably assume that they are not so lacking in economic knowledge or in the capacity for straight economic thinking as to suppose that our industries can be kept going at a reasonable rate or for a reasonable period of time per week only on condition that the multitude shall continue to work eight or ten hours per day in order to satisfy the "extravagant desires for luxury" felt by the economically powerful minority. Let us charitably assume that the members of the Committee merely overlooked the fact that the productive capacity of our men and machines could all be utilized to a reasonable extent in turning out goods for the satisfaction of wants already known and felt, particularly the elementary and rational wants of the majority.

In their preoccupation with a conception of prosperity which logically implies a belief in production for its own sake, the members of the Committee are in line with our baneful tradition of Puritan industrial ethics. Describing this ethical discipline as it was taking final shape at the end of the seventeenth century, R. H. Tawney writes in Religion and the Rise of Capitalism:

> The worship of production and ever greater production—the slavish drudgery of the millionaire and his unhappy servants—was to be hallowed by the precepts of the same compelling creed.

Nevertheless, one of the two underlying principles of the Puritan ethics of work and production has been incontinently rejected by the Committee as by all American industrialists. George O'Brien says, in the Economic Effects of the Reformation:

> The desire for ever-increasing production, which is a feature of the capitalist spirit, was encouraged not only by the Puritan conception of the fulfilment of the vocation, but also by the other branch of Puritan ascetic teaching—namely, the observance of strict frugality and austerity.

Instead of urging men to strive for greater production through "frugality and austerity," the Committee points to the inexhaustible spring of "almost insatiable wants." Whether this new emphasis upon limitless consumption is more rational, or less, than the traditional maxims of frugality and saving, it constitutes, at any rate, eloquent testimony to the capacity of our industries for overproduction.

The program suggested by Stuart Chase is more in harmony with humanity and reason than the suggestions of the Committee on Recent Economic Changes. It is quoted here, not necessarily as correct in detail but as indicating the right approach and method:

> Let me recapitulate. Machinery saves labor in a given process; one man replaces ten. A certain number of these men are needed to build and service the new machine, but some of them are permanently displaced. Now if the articles called for remain the same, and the financial system remains the same, sooner or later half the workers (let us say) in the country can produce what once required

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> the labor of all the workers. The other half are on the park bench. But as an alternative, all can continue to work for half as many hours in the day. Or all can combine to work a full day and produce twice as much. None of these clean-cut alternatives has of course been taken. The ideal result would be something in the nature of hours reduced a third, and output of sound necessities and comforts increased two-thirds. This would end hard work and poverty forever. Instead, hours have fallen a little, output has increased considerably, but the present financial control neither releases sufficient purchasing power to enlarge output as far as the machine is readily capable of enlarging it unhindered, nor promotes the kind of output which necessarily makes for the good life.

The most reassuring and the most significant truths that emerge from an objective study of American conditions today are these: In the United States, at least, the prosperity of the industrial system is consistent with and dependent upon the welfare of the toiling masses. Industrial well-being and the principles of justice can be practically harmonized. The doctrine of the living wage and all the other humane doctrines taught by Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical, On the Condition of Labor, can no longer be stigmatized as visionary by any intelligent student of our industrial achievements and potentialities. To establish universal living wages and to abolish all excessive labor, as regards persons, quality and hours, would be the most direct, prompt and effective means of meeting the menace of chronic unemployment and of ensuring prosperity for our industries. The thing can be accomplished if only the masters of industry and of politics will devote to the problem a small part of the energies that they habitually spend in making and selling goods and in pursuing profits.

Although the Report of the Unemployment in the United States provides no adequate guidance along this line for either industrialists or statesmen, it contains one paragraph which gives full recognition to the urgency of the problem and the obligation of society to solve the problem. The following paragraph expresses the views of the senators themselves who conducted the hearings:

> It may as well be remembered that society is going to provide an opportunity for man to sustain himself, or is going to have to sustain man. Society is going to provide opportunity for man to pay his own way or is going to pay for him. Society may as well make every effort to do the job constructively because no society can be strong in which its members are encouraged or forced to adopt the position or place of those seeking charity.

ITALIAN JOURNEY

By E. M. ALMEDINGEN

THE real story began at Milan. That was where I met him, that delightful American youth, who seemed perfect sartorially and lured you with some as yet indefinite promise of widely spanned achievements in his maturer years. Twenty-two and golden-haired and blue-eyed and six feet two at that! Yale—or was it Harvard?—a decent old family background, an unbounded enthusiasm for all he saw and heard, some highly poetical acquaintance with the renaissance, particularly where the latter touched Italy and a dreamy Della Robbia-esque longing after art—ecclesiastical art at that! I did not quite gather what his creed was, but a remark or two enlightened me as to the fact that his father was Episcopalian and his mother a rather indifferent Baptist, neither of which creeds seemed to make any appeal to the son.

Having personally never been to America, I fell in love with her people after about twenty minutes' talk with this youth. Reverence and shyness there were about him and in plenty, and something else, too, which utterly escaped a downright definition. A touch of a Greek disc-thrower, glad of the sun and of his supple limbs. Some boldness suggestive of a Phoenician sailor, he intimately conversant with stellar ways. Whoever had suggested the European trip to the boy doubtless rendered worthy service to his country, and need one say more than that?

Of course he talked a lot of delightful nonsense. Could not very well help it. Talked to me about the aesthetic appeal of the Church as he found it in the Latin South. Called it the refuge for all poets and dreamers in the world—this immediately after his return from the Duorno, which, so far as I could gather, had come to him in terms of a white-winged eagle.

"You just can't be prosaic if you're a Catholic, can you?" he flung at me, bending that golden head of his over some engravings of the cathedral he had just bought. "There's too much sheer beauty in it."

And so on—enrapturedly, ecstatically—from which I could gather that his idea of the Church would hardly ever shift from the highly colored conception of Ghirlandajo frescoes and Della Robbia plaques. Yet he did not come to Italy to wander in and out of churches. His was a clear-cut objective. And a rather venturesome one, too. You see, he loved letters as much as painting. Carnacco drew him on. He spoke of d'Annunzio with a neophyte's bated breath, referred to him as "master," the blue eyes dreamier than ever. Of course he meant to go to Carnacco.

"Read much of him?" I asked casually, only to find that the boy was well-nigh d'Annunzionized. So many young people are.

But while he talked about Carnacco, I began (mentally, of course) planning an Italian trip for him,

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making him go and drink his fill at the least-known and probably most wholesome wells, imagining his sober wonder at such miracles as the tiny Abruzzi townships, the grave and easily understood appeal of Verona and Padua, the turreted monastic strongholds in the northern mountains, spire, shrine and relief seldom touched upon in guide-books, still less frequently appraised by a tourist's eye. So many of these can be found in Italy. I fancied that the boy's qualities would not be misspent among these, that he would carry there his amazingly humble sense of wonder. I confess to a secret hope that he would come with a slightly changed outlook on the Church as being merely a haven for all poets and dreamers in the world. Yes, I did so hope—for isn't there some occasionally furtive proselytism in most of us?

So I planned out that trip—would have laid it before him, but he cheated me out of it. He would talk of Carnacco.

Well, I had been there. And because of this I would tell him nothing. His enthusiasm reached its summit when a misleadingly kind English friend in Milan went the surprising length of getting an interview for the boy. I suppose all great writers nurse some kind of sentimental indulgent weakness for the young and unknown lovers of theirs. Anyway, the boy's madly cherished objective promised achievement. To Carnacco he would go.

"And after?" I asked him tentatively.

"Oh, I want to go straight back to Paris," he replied. "You see, to me, all Italy is just d'Annunzio, just like all Russia is nothing but Tolstoy," and he added hurriedly, "and perhaps Dostoievsky, too. Don't you think that you get the sense of a country through its representative writer?"

I agreed as to the principle.

Carnacco became the one all-pervading theme of discussions from now on. And again I had to admit that even in this, his enthusiasm over the approaching interview, there was quite a lot to admire. He was not looking forward to it from any "later-to-be-made-practicable" angle. I sensed that on his return home there would be no cheap parading, no vulgarly journalese reminiscences, none of that intolerable head-liney self-aggrandizement—with a studiedly careless preface—"Oh yes—went over to see d'Annunzio when I was in Europe. A great fellow he," and so on.

Yet, all the same, I wondered about the possible results of his visit. So I tried to picture him at Carnacco, going about its hilly gardens, side by side with the short brown-habited figure, going all over the really exquisite house, inhaling its atmosphere of almost stagey extravagance, its farcical oratory—furnished to answer the various moods of the writer. Pictured him in among that undoubtedly attractive environment of slippery epigram and not always clean wit and wondered whether the hopeless incongruity Carnacco stands for would not be too much even for his own limitless sense of wonder. Hero-worship is apt to be a sand-built quality—on occasions. But, somehow, I let none of my own recollections intrude into our talks. He waxed eloquent in his hopes.

The very morning before he went, a detail occurred to him:

"Is it true that d'Annunzio goes about clad in the Franciscan habit?"

"It is," I agreed.

"But he isn't a friar—is he?"

"Certainly not."

"Then why does he do it?"

"You'd better ask him," seemed the only reply I could give. "I don't suppose anybody really knows."

"It can't be a mere pose, can it?" the youth insisted. "I mean—he's too great for it, isn't he?"

But I merely repeated: "You'd better ask him."

He went and quite involuntarily I followed his journey in my thoughts, secretly hoping that I might yet be successful in persuading him to give some consideration to the trip I had planned for him. I just did not want him to leave Italy immediately after Carnacco. It seemed to me somehow unfair to Italy.

Came a letter from him. The first of quite a series to follow. A breathless, gratefully unhackneyed description of La Garda, his sunrise breakfast and his expectation of the great event to come. I folded the letter away, waiting for more. The second note was such a scribble I despaired over it. The gardens were mentioned and the house. His eager eye had duly observed the marvelous carvings in the oratory. He waxed poetic over the flowers and the rare bindings in the library. He quoted an odd fragment of a poem. He made no mention whatever of the host.

I began to wonder whether his boundless hero-worship sealed into silence whatever discoveries he may have come across. Or whether he had misinterpreted my own silences and resolved to keep all the delights to himself, convinced that I might sit in mocking judgment on his enthusiasm.

There came other equally colorful letters, each dealing with some striking detail of the house or the garden. It seemed almost a pity the boy had gone out hero-worshiping and not "journalizing." His copy had infinite value. Certainly I had never before read such illuminating accounts of Carnacco. In all he spent five days at La Garda. He wrote daily, sometimes twice a day. And not one of his letters carried as much as a brief reference to his host. On the very eve of return he wrote saying that he had changed his plans about going straight to Paris and would stay in Italy a little longer. I at once busied myself over the all but laid aside details of my trip planned for him. I got quite absorbed in it! And to think that he cheated me of its fulfilment, after all!

I made up my mind not to pester him with questions on his return. And there was no need to do it either. His sense of wonder ran along nearly parallel lines with a sometimes embarrassing frankness.

"Wasn't at all what I had expected," he admitted.

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"But you wrote me sheer poems about it," I reminded him.

"Oh that," he gestured. "My letters about the house—you mean? Oh yes—the house and the grounds are marvelous, but other things—they rather made me wonder."

I felt slightly disappointed. The boy had gone wondering everywhere. This explained nothing.

"Unreality," he jerked out with some obvious effort, "Unreality is apt to jar, isn't it? And why a habit and a girdle and crucifixes and an oratory? None of them fit there, you see. And all those pictures! He can't share all that sort of thing, can he? Then why should he pretend he does? Awfully stupid of me, but it takes something away from his art, you know. I feel all muddled about it somehow. I had thought that all art must be genuine, mustn't it? But there is so much unreality, you can't see the wood for the trees."

And suddenly he looked up: "I know why you wouldn't talk about it! It's all a pose, nothing but a pose?"

He was hurt to an extent I couldn't gauge and hurt by things which, in his case, anyhow, ought not to have hurt him at all. The kind of thing misused at Carnacco, the habit and the girdle, need they have touched an indifferent youngster like him, who soberly prided himself on having an open mind "wide enough to shelter prejudice and scepticism"?

"Nothing but a pose," he repeated. "I guess it's foolish to think so—but—it does take away from his art."

"Did you ask him about these things?" I demanded a little abruptly.

The youngster flushed. "How could I? He was my host. But I did tell him I wondered about it all."

"And—"

"Well, he talked rather a lot, not that I understood any of it."

And, somehow, the conversation driveled. Big details had jarred on him at Carnacco and he could not explain just why they had so hurt him. He had obviously found plenty of poetic appeal, but it left him dissatisfied and so far as I could see, the habit and the girdle had most to do with his hurt bewilderment. I started entertaining him with the details of the trip I had planned for him. He listened eagerly enough and expressed his gratitude. Yes, he'd be right glad to start—in a few days' time. He wanted a spell of leisurely quiet to readjust his Carnacco impressions.

"Must find out just why it had all baffled me," he said. I left him to it. In a way I did not feel sorry for him. I should have been had he sped straight on to Paris, but the Carnacco unreality had stayed his way. That sense of wonder in him was allied to some innate ruthless demand for logic at all costs.

Well, I said he had cheated me about that trip. So he had—and most surprisingly—by leaving Milan in a few days and without as much as saying a brief good-by. That unreality, seen at Carnacco, had planted another obective in his way. He made straight for it. "Must find out just why it had all baffled me."

From Assisi I heard a word. The postmark did not astonish me, though I had not marked Assisi on my itinerary for him. But Assisi was an excellent antidote to Carnacco. The note rang with very little enthusiasm, in fact, some sentences sounded almost too dry for the writer as I knew him. I wrote him back a few congratulatory words on his choice of route and heard no more for months and months to come.

God's grace has nothing to do with geographical boundaries, and so, in a direct way, it has no bearing on the boy's stay at Assisi. What was meant to come did come—surprisingly and quickly. He wrote me no extravagant poems about his subsequent reception into the Church. In fact his language became lame and halting in places. But the ultimate sequel can't easily be denied the very quintessence of poetry—not that he personally put it into any such terms.

And not from him did I hear about it either. Wordshy as he had been over the real outcome of his Carnacco visit, the boy shrank from writing me about the Franciscan reality he had found—and that in all fulness—for himself in Umbria.

Miss Stephany

She had an ancient shawl
Embroidered with wild rice
Whereon the white birds all
Followed their own device:
And on her parasol
A bird of paradise.

A quaking northern May
Might meet her going forth,
But she had found a way
To circumvent the north.
One or another day
She counted little worth

Without a promenade
To give her birds the sun.
And no excuse she made
Nor felt she needed one:
Pattering unafraid
Her little feet would run.

Not knowing she was old,
The radiance in her mind
Would keep away the cold:
And on a day unkind
She saw the sun in gold
That no one else could find.

Unreached by human word
And dreaming her own weather,
The next news that we heard
Concerned birds of a feather.
She and her paradise bird
Were gone together.

GRACE HAZARD CONKLING.

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MINORITIES IN EGYPT

By PIERRE CRABITÈS

The rights of nationals or of minorities have often been a topic for discussion. At present the subject is once again of importance because of a change in the relationship between the government of Egypt and "minorities" which dwell under its jurisdiction. Mr. Crabitès studies the situation in the following paper, comments upon the significant differences between the old order and the new, and concludes that it is the duty of the United States to maintain in Egypt "the parity between foreigners and minorities defined in 1922." We may add that the author has sent his manuscript from Cairo.—The Editor.

AMERICAN Catholics are interested in the Anglo-Egyptian draft agreement elaborated on August 3, 1929, by the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Arthur Henderson, and the Egyptian Prime Minister, Mohammed Mahmoud Pasha. So are American Presbyterians. In a minor degree the proposed treaty likewise affects all American Protestants and Jews. I shall concentrate my attention upon the message directed to American Catholics. I shall, however, refer incidentally, and by way of illustration, to the issue which is presented to American Presbyterians.

The pact which will be submitted to the British Parliament and to the Egyptian electorate will not bind the United States unless approved by Washington. In other words, the controversy which the enlightened statesmanship of Mr. Arthur Henderson and of Mohammed Mahmoud Pasha has sought to solve, bears upon, among points, the capitulatory rights of eleven powers, including Great Britain and the United States.

England, on account of her special position in Egypt, has political interests in the latter country which transcend those granted to her by the old Ottoman Capitulations. In respect of this "special position," London and Cairo may contract without the concurrence of Washington. Britain may, however, do away with her capitulatory prerogatives without consulting America. But unless the United States sees fit to relinquish the American Capitulations, they will remain in force, regardless of any decision taken by the British Parliament or by the Egyptian electorate.

I shall not go into details as to what I mean when I speak of "the capitulatory rights of the United States." I shall abstain from so doing because I discussed the matter, at some length, in a paper which The Commonweal published over my signature in its issue of April 4, 1928. My article bore the title, Christian Patriarchs of Islam. In it I sought to explain that the Levant was divided into water-tight, non-communicating communities or legal entities, because it suited the polity of the Moslem overlord to segregate Mohammedans from Christians and Jews, and to subdivide the two latter peoples into non-interlocking segments wherever sects or rites sprang up among them.

All of this took place as early as the seventh century of our era. In those days foreign interests had not percolated into Islam. The Christians and Jews referred to in the preceding paragraph were, therefore, subjects of the Moslem caliph.

In due course, Christians from abroad carried their work to the shores dominated by the elect of Mohammed. The followers of the Prophet tolerated the presence of these intruders, but would not allow such uncircumcised non-believers to be amenable to Moslem law, which, as is well known, springs from the Turan. The all-powerful Arab rulers therefore vouchsafed to foreigners the privilege of locating within Islamic territory on condition that such traders should be housed in ghettoes and kept in order by their consuls.

In 1535, Suleiman the Magnificent systematized these earlier practices by issuing to Francis I of France a patent or diploma regulating the conditions under which Frenchmen were allowed to inhabit the Ottoman domains. This mark of imperial favor was divided into capitulae or articles. It, therefore, became known as "the Capitulations." A few years later England obtained a similar franchise. America was granted her charter something like a hundred years ago.

All of these "Capitulations" specifically declare that foreigners are not amenable to Ottoman laws. Times have changed. In 1535, Christians and Jews were not good enough to be allowed to have the statutes and customs of a Moslem state apply to them. By this Anglo-Egyptian accord of August, 1929, Egyptians are seeking to force Americans to accept conditions which in 1832 they were deemed to be unworthy of enjoying.

The first decade of the twentieth century had ended before Egypt ceased officially to form part of the Ottoman empire. It is for this reason that these Turkish grants apply to the land of the Pharaohs.

Under the aegis of French and Italian Capitulations, the Catholic Church has prospered in Egypt. The Jesuit Fathers and the Christian Brothers have flourishing and expanding colleges. The Sacred Heart, Mère de Dieu and Franciscan nuns have large convents and prosperous schools. The Capitulations have been for many years the Ark of the Covenant of these useful institutions. Christians, Moslems and Jews crowd their portals. These cultural centres spread the doctrine of love and symbolize the highest type of God-fearing scholarship.

In their wake Catholicism has made many converts in the country where Saint Mark first planted the seed of Christianity. There are approximately 100,000 native Egyptians who today are in spiritual commun-

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ion with the Holy See. In addition to these Catholic Copts, to give them their Egyptian name, there are also some 20,000 Syrians and other local subjects who are likewise true to Rome.

In 1854, American Presbyterians entered Egypt. They have nobly performed their duty. They have taught the Gospel. They have opened schools. Their educational work now has an average daily enrolment of some 20,000 boys and girls, young men and young women. This good work is under the moral guardianship of the American flag.

Just as Catholic churches, organized by a local clergy and conducted under Egyptian leadership, have been the fruit brought to maturity by the Catholic teaching orders and missionary fathers, so also has this Protestant effort been rewarded by the coming into being of native Egyptian Protestant churches technically known as Evangelical churches. They have no legal connection with the American legation. In law they are Egyptian and not American institutions, just as the Catholic Coptic churches are likewise Egyptian and neither French nor Italian. But according to standards which are ethically and fundamentally and morally higher than those sanctioned by wax and parchment, those Catholic Coptic churches and those Evangelical churches rest upon the moral bulwark of the Capitulations. They therefore repose upon a foundation which finds its bedrock in the conscience of the Occident.

When England, on February 28, 1922, abolished the British protectorate over Egypt, Britain specifically reserved to herself, among other matters, "the protection of foreign interests and of minorities." Egypt has a population of 14,000,000, of whom 13,000,000 are Mohammedans. There are in Egypt something over 800,000 Jacobite or Orthodox Copts. The Catholic and Protestant native Egyptians, therefore, constitute a minority within a minority. This fact accentuates their position inasmuch as Moslem sentiment, in seeking to get the local Christian reaction to a given measure, will naturally tend to follow the Orthodox or Jacobite point of view, and thus, perhaps, do untold harm to the moral wards of the Occident while sincerely endeavoring to deal fairly with the Christian minority taken as a whole.

The Henderson-Mahmoud Pasha agreement has an article which husbands the interests of foreigners. Here are its terms:

> Article XI. His Britannic Majesty recognizes that the capitulatory régime now existing in Egypt is no longer in accordance with the spirit of the times and with the present state of Egypt.
>
> His Britannic Majesty accordingly undertakes to use all his influence with the powers possessing capitulatory rights in Egypt to obtain, in conditions which will safeguard the legitimate interests of foreigners, the transfer to the Mixed Tribunals of the jurisdiction of the existing Consular Courts and the application of Egyptian legislation to foreigners.

This clause is not a model of pellucid clearness of expression. Its meaning is made less nebulous by certain correspondence annexed to the draft agreement. It results from the terms of this Article XI and of the letters which amplify its scope that the Mixed or International Courts of Egypt may declare unconstitutional and inoperative as against foreigners any Egyptian law which unfairly burdens foreigners or which discriminates against them.

No such power is vested in that body or in any other authority to enjoin the execution of an Egyptian law which may discriminate against minorities or impose an unfair burden upon them. This omission was not accidental. It was intentional. These annexes make this point perfectly clear. They state in so many words that:

> It is recognized that this question [that of minorities] will in future be the exclusive concern of the Egyptian government.

There has been, in a word, what the French so aptly call a volte face and what sportsmen so accurately describe as a reversal of form. In 1922 Britain put minorities and foreigners upon a footing of equality. In 1929 she safeguards the purse, the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of foreigners and abandons minorities. It does not lie in the mouth of an American to criticize London. It behooves him, if he be in touch with the facts, to point out the duty of the United States.

That duty consists in maintaining in 1929 the parity between foreigners and minorities as it was defined in 1922.

It should not be said that American Capitulations are the sheet anchor of capital or of the privileged foreigners who enjoy Egyptian hospitality. It should be made clear that Americans want no protection for their bank accounts or their homes which is withheld from "minorities" which trusted them when they left the religion of their forbears to become Catholic Copts or members of the Evangelical church.

It is true that the Egyptian constitution guarantees freedom of worship. It is likewise true that Egyptian Nationalists have given no evidence of any unfriendliness to Catholic Copts or to Egyptian Protestants. It is also true that Catholic Copts and Egyptian Protestants are high in the councils of Egyptian Nationalism, and with their lips spurn any desire for special protection. But these considerations cannot wipe out the deadly parallel or blot away the significance of that 1922 reservation.

To American Catholics, whose school system is the brightest jewel in the crown of American Catholic achievement, it is shocking to think of America accepting protection for her nationals when the wards of the Occident are not granted similar treatment. These local Egyptians have no legal right to invoke the aid of Washington. They do not do so. But does that fact weigh in the balance?

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WILD FOWL

By WILLIAM EVERETT CRAM

WHEN as a boy I first went hunting, I was urged by the combined impulses of hunter and naturalist. At that time the season for shooting water-fowl and marsh birds began in the spring with the first north-bound flight of water-fowl following up the open water of stream, mill-pond and meadow. At the close of this north-bound flight, there came an interval of only about two months before the beginning of the fall shooting season, the first of August. Twenty-four hours was then the length of a hunter's day, the first faint glimpse of daylight showing in the east at 2:30, at that season in this latitude, and from then until dusk shut down there was always the chance of flushing wood duck, bittern, lophan and poke, as you followed the margin of meadow stream from one mill-pond to another. As darkness came on the night herons, commonly known as "quarks," left their roosts in the tall timber, slowly flying in scattered flocks to their feeding ground; eastward to the salt mud flats if the night promised to be starlit and calm; inland to the fresh-water meadows before a storm.

The black ducks, which slept in great flocks out at sea during the day when the waves were not too rough, and flew in to feed in the marshes and salt ponds at night, furnished night shooting until daylight came again. Wood ducks (ranked by many artists as the most beautiful bird in the world) nested high up in hollow trees along the river banks. Wary and swift of flight, they seemed to have a better chance of survival than did the slower winged black ducks, for their brilliant coloring served rather as concealment than otherwise, blending as it did with the reflection of cardinal flower, pickerel weed, wax flower, vervain and pond lilies among which they swam.

Young wood ducks in their first summer's plumage of soft brown and white, were actually easier to see than were their gorgeously marked elders; and yet their numbers continually grew less, and a permanent closed season was established in the hope of saving them while they were yet fairly abundant, but without avail.

One Indian summer day ten years ago, I stood at gaze, charmed by the lovely reflection of blue sky, cardinal flower and pickerel weed on the still water; then suddenly became aware that the very heart of the picture was a pair of wood ducks in full plumage. They were the last I have ever seen. In those days no other ducks nested here; breeding in great numbers in the then almost inaccessible north, black ducks, widgeon and teal came south in successive flights during October and November.

In what an infinite variety of ways the wild birds and beasts endeavor to fool their enemies! These broods of wild ducklings before they can fly are very amusing. Usually when I approach the reedy pools where they swim, they just slip into hiding in the sedge. But one morning last summer as I walked across the pasture, I noticed a fox sitting near the river bank, and high up in a dead elm, a hawk on the lookout for game. A black duck with her family of a dozen or more flappers was swimming in the shadow of the bridge, and when I suddenly appeared above the river bank, they all began swimming in circles and splashing the water with their short wings. Not one of them was visible for more than the briefest glimpse, for the air was filled with spattering water drops for a height of two feet over a space of a rod or more. Mrs. Duck had evidently been well aware of the presence of the fox and the hawk, and when my sudden appearance deceived her into thinking that one or the other of these two enemies was upon them, she adopted the quickest and surest method of hiding; the young ducks doing just as she did, probably through instinctive imitation. Certainly the fox would have found much greater difficulty in catching one of them than if they had hidden among the rushes.

While her youngsters were still splashing for all they were worth, the mother duck swam away from them into quieter water and took wing with much apparent difficulty; flying low for a few rods beyond the farther bank and then falling into the grass, she rolled over on her back with web feet wagging in the air. Then she got up and started waddling lamely toward the woods. When I crossed the bridge and followed her, she took wing once more, but only for a few yards before falling to earth again. In this way she led me to the edge of the woods a hundred yards away from water, and then flying up into the air with all the swiftness of a perfectly well duck, she returned and led her flock away.

The law for the protection of game birds has in many cases proved surprisingly successful. Sea-gulls serve as the most striking illustration in this direction. I recall the days when a herring gull was deemed a prize by the old hunters who often risked long shots in the hope of bringing one down. Now the owners of private yachts are protesting that an open season on sea-gulls is necessary to thin them out and teach them that an expensive private yacht is not meant to be used as a roosting place for such untidy birds.

The smaller marsh birds, yellowlegs, plover and peeps, as well as the upland plover and killdeer, have in the space of the last few seasons, increased considerably, undoubtedly owing to the year-round closed season recently imposed. In the late summer I now hear once more the clear musical whistle of the upland plover, and frequently see them in field and pasture, though for an interval of a score of years or more, I was almost convinced that they had gone the way of the passenger pigeon and the Carolina paroquet. It is satisfying, too, to observe how much less wary they are now than formerly. The killdeer plover I used to read about, but very seldom saw. Now occasional pairs have their nests in upland pastures here and there, and there seems good ground for believing that being unmolested, they may increase in numbers in the years to come.

I cannot learn of any sign of the return of the golden and black-breasted plovers; whose autumn migrations coastwise used to darken the sky, but the beach plovers, sanderlings and peeps are here in their season in ever-increasing numbers, and exhibit a lack of fear almost equal to that of the sea-gulls.

A water-fowl which used to furnish amusing and harmless sport, both to the hunter and the hunted, was the little grebe, dabchick, hell diver or dipper. In the days of the muzzle-loader we used to lie on the bank of the mill-pond waiting impatiently until one of these little tailless swimmers, clothed in fur almost like that of a muskrat, would swim within range; then carefully sighting, we pulled the trigger. The snap of the percussion cap would be followed by a cloud of smoke and deafening report and a mighty kick on the shoulder, and the charge of mixed shot would go spattering along water, but the dipper almost invariably vanished just before the shot reached him, to bob up serenely from below far out of gunshot. It was the coming into use of the breach-loader and smokeless powder that turned the tables against them, and I fear the species is almost extinct.

The passenger pigeon was gone before my time, but I greatly enjoyed hearing my grandfather tell of their immense flights

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when he was a boy, and how he and his brother netted them in the rye lot at the edge of the woods. They would cut a slender hardwood sapling forty feet long, bend it into the form of a half-circle, and make it fast flat on the ground. The net was fastened at one edge along the sapling, and the other pegged down with forked sticks. Next the bow of sapling was lifted and bent over and caught beneath a trigger where the pegs held the other edge of the net in place. Grain was then scattered for bait, and with a string fastened to the trigger the boys lay in hiding in the bushes, until down from the sky darted wild pigeons by the thousand, crowding and fluttering thicker and thicker and covering every inch of the ground in their eagerness to get the bait. Then the string was pulled, and the sapling, released from its tension, snapped to its original position carrying one edge of the net along with it, and ensnaring perhaps a hundred pigeons, while the others, rising in air, disappeared beyond the tree-tops.

In Goodrich's Natural History, published in 1876, an illustration shows a net exactly similar to this, set on the bank of an English stream and tended by two English boys. I have little doubt that my grandfather's great-grandfather used one like it as a boy in England before he sailed across the salt water to these New England shores.

An experience of my own while hunting may strike the reader as hardly believable. The only witnesses of my shot were the redwinged blackbirds and dragon-flies; so my word must stand or fall as the credulity of the reader shall determine.

My little sparrowhawk Cleopatra had been calling all day for fresh meat. The butcher's cart passed our place only once a week, and as we used no ice then, the problem of keeping her supplied was difficult, for she would go hungry rather than taste meat that had hung long enough to suit the human taste. It was the busy haying season and Cleopatra had ridden out into the field load after load, perched on the tall stake at the front of the hay-rack. Not one field-mouse had run out from beneath the haycocks as they were pitched onto the rack.

She caught a few grasshoppers and then started out across the pasture on a bird hunt, but quickly returned pursued by an angry mob of king birds, blackbirds and swallows. Lighting on the broad rim of my straw hat, she scrambled round and round it, chattering with excitement, then took refuge beneath it, perched on my shoulder until the crowd of her pursuers had scattered; nor did she venture on another bird hunt alone after that for weeks.

After the last hay load was in the barn I took my gun—a short-barreled muzzle-loader which had a way of scattering the charge better suited to close range than for longer shots. Woodchucks and crows kept persistently out of range that afternoon, and I hesitated to kill blackbirds or squirrels in the summertime. But the season for marsh birds opened July 15 in those days, so I followed the water course in the hope of getting a shot.

At last I heard a water-rail crying among the rushes. As I had not used a gun long enough to count on making a successful flying shot, I waited and waited, crouching at the border of the sedge vainly trying to get a glimpse of the bird which was continually changing its position, but would not come in sight. At last I raised my gun, aiming at the sound, until it seemed to come to my ears right along the gun barrel. Then I fired, and wading out among the rushes, keeping track along the line of shot-punctured reeds, picked up my water-fowl and carried it home to my hungry little falcon.

THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Many Waters

THERE are moments, it is true, when the American presentation of Monckton Hoffe's play, Many Waters, verges on that softer sentimentality which ultimately obscures deeper feelings. But to catch the least part of its richer and deeper truths, one must take it in its poignant and at times heartrending entirety, and abandon one's self to an understanding of those unspoken things which batter and caress, shake the foundations of one's being and then softly mold the wreckage into what we lightly call character—and know inwardly to be the flame of spirit.

How else can one describe a play which takes two very ordinary lives and gives them that curious illumination which comes only from the most intimate picture of what they have passed through together? The form in which the story is told is simple enough. A playwright and a manager are discussing theatre audiences, with the inevitable conclusion that they are made up of hopelessly commonplace people, who have never known romance in their own lives, and so seek through the theatre a species of vicarious romance with which to brighten their existence. As the two are talking, a middle-aged couple come to see the manager to arrange about leasing him their home for the summer. When the manager asks them some pointed questions about their lives, they laughingly disclaim anything faintly resembling romance. No indeed. Theirs have been very ordinary and simple lives. Yes. They would like very much to see The Cinderella Princess—one of three plays the manager then has running—would prefer it, in fact, to another play of serious realism. As they leave, the manager looks at the playwright, as who should say, "there you are," and the playwright agrees. Very ordinary people indeed. No imagination. No romance. No urge toward finer things. Starved lives.

But this is only Monckton Hoffe's way of opening up to you a charmed secret—the real truth about the lives of this middle-aged couple. Scene by scene you are told of the passing magic—of their accidental meeting in the park during a thunder shower, of their swift and sudden love, of their mute and frightened marriage before a magistrate, with two scrubwomen as witnesses, of their rise to a moderate livelihood, of the daughter in their lives who has loved too soon and in a way forbidden, of her death in childbirth just as bankruptcy is facing her father, of the irony of his trial when he is reprimanded for spending too much on the education of his daughter, now dead, of the slow and painful return to a modest income with a little house in the country—the very house now about to be leased to the scornful manager.

Yes—an amazingly simple story, simply told, but with a fidelity to emotional values that almost sets you quivering, does, in fact, force you to a tension relieved only by the silent growth of an unquenchable flame. For in the trials, hopes and tragedies of this couple, you find one thing magnificently unshaken and rising always stronger—the mute understanding and love that unites them, unsung, almost unrealized, yet worthy of a poet whose instrument is strung with the chords of life itself.

The sentimentality I spoke of does not come in the writing of Monckton Hoffe, nor in the superlatively sensitive acting of Ernest Truex as the husband and Marda Vanne as the wife. It comes merely in certain details of presentation, in incidental

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music and in the captions of certain scenes which unhappily endeavor to translate for the audience that which needs no translation. Here is a play, if ever there was one, which tells its own story with the acme of restraint, as forthright and simple as the lives it portrays, and as tender and compassionate as truth itself. We do not need to be told that here is romance. What Monckton Hoffe has not told us in his deeply etched lines, Mr. Truex and Miss Vanne tell us in gestures of muted eloquence. Such literary art is rare beyond price; such acting comes but a few times in a stage generation. That should be enough.

Plays such as this should go far to break the spell of brash hokum which has recently passed for authentic realism. There is, in the finest art, no line between romance and realism. They are one. The difficulty lies in showing why and how they are one, and that is why only great art can bring them to real fusion.

The true essence of romance is struggle and conquest. The trappings matter little. No ancient tale of knights in armor can win the glamour of romance unless it is keyed to struggle and conquest—for that is the story of life itself, a true and sometimes even desperate realism. If the obstacles are poverty, sickness, death, the struggle is all the greater because the obstacles are more inescapable and not of deliberate choice. The spirit in which the battle is waged measures the degree of romance, not the ground on which it is fought nor the costumes worn nor the elegance and grace of the weapons used. It needs only the eye of the great artist, of the man who penetrates beneath detail to stark truth, to find struggle as the most obvious realism, the one thing never absent from life. To complete his romance from this raw stuff, he has to find the spirit of conquest in some human breast—no more and no less. It may be only the conquest of character, of soul, rising above the defeat of every material effort. But to fuse the realism of life with the romance of the spirit, there must be the faith that moves mountains—even if that faith should be found to lie only in the hearts of a humble English building contractor and his wife.

Many Waters breathes the spirit of an artist, and holds you inexorably with the romance that knows neither time nor place, circumstance nor limitation, seeking only human understanding. (At Maxine Elliott's Theatre.)

Gambling

GEORGE M. COHAN has only to set his mind to it to make you realize what amazing resourcefulness he commands. He is not a great playwright, and never will be, for the simple reason that he cannot, for the life of him, draw the portrait of a sympathetic woman without making her unbelievably sentimental. His women characters either border on musical-comedy sweetness or have a tang as hard as rock salt. This is true even of his latest mystery play, Gambling, in which the most interesting feminine character he has drawn for a long time commands attention chiefly through her hard-boiled tactics and philosophy. For the rest, however, Gambling makes a pretty good stage yarn, helped out in no small measure by good acting including that of Mr. Cohan himself in the central rôle.

This time we have Mr. Cohan as an underworld gambling master, the proprietor of a fashionable joint. News comes in the first act that his ward, whom he has tried to keep far from his own familiar surroundings, has been murdered. The rest of the play concerns his own persistent and tenacious efforts to solve the crime, only to discover a deeper cause than ever for sorrow when the full circumstances preceding her death are brought to light. There is plenty of chance for the good old Cohan brand of pathos. Mary Philips shares with Mr. Cohan in acting honors. She has been given the difficult part of a woman with a caustic tongue and heavily calculating disposition—quite different from such a type as she played in The Wisdom Tooth. Her characterization in the present instance is one of the most complete of its kind I have ever seen; in it a gesture and a glance are quite as full of meaning as even the pungent lines Mr. Cohan has given her. Gambling rates in the upper brackets among the many mystery plays now on Broadway—although the spectator has lost interest in the detection of the murderer long before the last act, in his absorption in the characters themselves. (At the Fulton Theatre.)

Mademoiselle Bourrat

AT MISS LE GALLIENNE'S, down on Fourteenth Street, they have followed up their amazingly sensitive performance of The Sea-gull with an equally adept rendering of Claude Anet's Mademoiselle Bourrat. It is not an easy play to give well, and the results achieved only serve to point more strongly than ever toward the advantages of the repertory system, so excellently exemplified in Fourteenth Street, as a means of attaining perfect ensemble.

The subject-matter of the play is not particularly cheerful. We find ourselves in the atmosphere of one of those narrow provincial French towns toward the end of the nineteenth century—narrow not so much in the moral sense as in the pressure of public opinion, the minuteness of the interests of its inhabitants and the impossibility of escaping watching neighborly eyes. The Bourrat household in particular is a dark confine, completely dominated by Madame Bourrat and her pride in family and appearances. Her seventeen-year-old daughter has been brought up in a state of unsuspecting innocence which only such an atmosphere could foster. She is caught unaware in a storm of worship for one of the men working on the place—with results which, during later acts, are set forth in unsparing detail. The efforts of Madame Bourrat to conceal the advent and birth of her daughter's child, and, after its death, to find someone willing to marry the girl herself, form the substance of the play—a narrative of bitter cruelty and of wide-eyed terror.

Naturally the play suffers from the particularity of the circumstances. The situation is so far from universal in the present day and in this country that it can be accepted only within its own confines. Let me make it plain that there is no obvious attempt to glorify the girl's love for the gardener. Your sympathy is directed entirely toward her growing maternal love and the pity of the ignorance which her mother imposes on her to the last. Yet there is, in the exaggeration of the mother's type and hardness, a slightly false note which the play never quite overcomes.

In general, it is free from any of the sophisticated suggestiveness which pervades so many plays of the moment dealing with similar subjects. It is, in essence, a study of conflicting maternal instincts, with many exceedingly tender scenes. It is unsparingly frank in its discussions and situation, but not in the salacious manner. Your feeling about it will depend largely on whether you care for such material in the theatre. But of one thing there is no doubt—that in the acting of the entire company, and of Josephine Hutchinson in particular as the girl, you will encounter a perfect expression of stage ensemble, of powerful restraint and of tender nuance, rarely to be matched. (At the Civic Repertory Theatre.)

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SONNETS

Maryland October

Land of the purple apples and fat churns,
Ripe hermitage of hardihood and peace,
Home to your harvest hills my heart returns,
Seeking the fields where autumn's golden fleece
Teaches the weary argonaut his goal.
Yours is the fragrant pasture, the sweet loam
Where urgencies of earth refresh the soul—
Land of the great red barn, the great white home!

Thick in your meadows where rich rivers run,
The wigwams of the gathered corn are set,
As round the campfire of the crimson sun
The Indian Summer smokes its calumet—
Here may I spend when summer days depart,
The mellow brief October of my heart!

ERNEST HARTSOCK.

"A Use in Measured Language"

When death upon two poets turned the key,
Taking that other self, comrade and wife,
What earthly good availed, when common life
Spread gaunt reminders of felicity?
Only a poet may a poet heal:
Bryant to Homer turned, whose art austere
Challenged an English version, true and clear.
On Dante's lines Longfellow set the seal

Of native idiom—the daily task
Upheld the men five years. If one could ask
For courage to endure a leaden sorrow,
What better than communion on the morrow
With a recorded soul, whose manly word
In alien ear renewed, may still be heard?

W. P. REEVES.

Oxford Bells

Always the ghost of these will wake again,
When other bells have clamored and been still—
Nowhere are bells that half so sweetly fill
The shaken tower, the drifting flaws of rain—
Of myriad sounds these only will remain.
Even waters poured all night under a mill
May be forgot, but on a distant hill,
When carillons die out across the plain

There will come back some morning's purity
Of bells, peal after peal of silver song,
Magdalen's sweet tune, or the tumultuous chimes
Of all the bells on some high noon in glee
Reverberant; or, echoing deep and long,
The bell of Christ's, tolling its hundred times.

SISTER MARIS STELLA.

Water-Color

I heard the rapiers of the swift rain quiver
And etch a muted fugue in silver on
The pressure of the dark, and on the river,
And on the slow wind's chill oblivion.
There was a stir of thunder to the south,
A tremor of hushed light along the form
Of nothingness, and I had felt my mouth
Ripe on the stark dimensions of the storm.

All night, like some half-ghost, I had gone down
Linked intervals of wind and mist, through clatter
Of water on dead leaves and the rain-blown
Uneasiness of sound; I saw clouds scatter
And race—and clash again—and break apart;
Nothing was quiet but my weathered heart.

PHILIP M. HARDING.

One Passing

Play me no music, now . . . there is enough
Of sadness in these leaves along the ground,
And in the bare boughs they are dreaming of
In a wide silence deeper than all sound.
There is no music anywhere so lonely
As long farewells that fill this listening air,
Where no sound is and no sure light, but only
The misty starshine where the trees are bare.

Something is passing, now, in this half-light,
Out of the world forever, over the rim
Of lost horizons—and so frail, so slight
That none has heard her footfall, and so dim
That none has seen her grave and lovely face,
Whose going saddens every lonely place.

DAVID MORTON.

We Who Gave of Youth

Into those patterned maple lanes we walked
In that dim April's shadow-dappled air
And when from clouds the sun winked out, we talked,
But when the shadows spoke, we silent were.
We heard the lispings of precocious spring
And blushed to lose the covering of words
That cloaked our love. We said not anything,
But seeing autumn, nested as the birds

Nest, counting gold in fallows still unturned.
Their bits of down, of twig, of twine, of grass,
Survive the summer and their young have learned
A winging wisdom on the southward pass,
But we who gave of youth, of youth bereaved,
Must mourn an April youngling, unconceived.

MADEFREY ODHNER.

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COMMUNICATIONS

REFLECTIONS UPON ART

Berkeley, Cal.

TO the Editor:—In regard to Ralph Adams Cram's Reflections upon Art, I wish to make a few observations on his attitude, particularly in reference to the so-called "modernism." This large subject he quickly dispatches without raising the slightest suspicion of a knowledge on his part of the extremely complex forces at play, or of an understanding of what has been accomplished in the movement. An oracle should at least be conversant with the situation today, and not rely on the acceptance of an evaluation of academic forces of twenty or thirty years ago or more. He should not catalogue contemporary activity once for all and dismiss the subject. It simply will not stay dismissed; it won't be fitted into a theory obviously developed for the art lecture platform. The hand must be on the pulse of the past, to be sure, but the stiff neck must lean in the other direction. We must seek out those engaged in modern pursuit of the arts—the sound judgment must have the tang of the studio and the workshop in preference to the learned stuffiness of the classroom.

There is now budding in the hotbeds of modern art a realization among many of the most sensitive painters, of the necessity of a so-called "religious" life. What many call the "spiritual life" may be amusing enough to those who have never had to search for the answer; but nevertheless it is true that once a creative artist has mastered his medium enough to cease being excited at his discoveries in that medium and the work produced under this stimulus, experimental and tentative as most of it is; when the studios themselves no longer furnish the incentive; after the artist has accomplished his preliminary trials; there comes the awful period when he must discover himself. He searches the past to find what the motifs were, and the conclusion of an ever-increasing number of artists is that all great art has been produced in the spirit of prayer; that great paintings were painted for divine eyes.

There has been going on for some time a return to the inspiration of religion in the arts. This return cannot be accomplished with obvious ceremonious movement and attendant publicity. We must not leave God out—He does not work that way. It is in the depths of the heart that He works. And the consciousness of this is actually developing before our eyes daily among those actively concerned with art.

Outside this world we have a Church. Seemingly that Church allows herself to be spoken for by stuffy, learned individuals who have a gift of words but who have bigoted hearts. But the heart of the Church is really modern, it is ever young.

When the Church goes to China, the first wave of missionaries may import and impose Gothic or Roman ideas. So, in America, this first wave imposed Irish ideas and visions, or German, or Italian, or French. But Catholicism is very free. After this first wave, the next generation rightly begins to urge indigenous ideas. And with forethought, the subsequent bishops get many grants from a very willing Pope in matters of importance to their own determination.

The Church Militant is essentially modern. All its heroes are modernists—radical in the intensity with which they realize their orthodoxy in comparison with the surrounding world. All authentic modern painters, likewise, are radical in the absolute devotion they have for the fundamentals of their arts, which they find in common with all great art. This devastating concern for the truth has always appeared to superficial observers as terrible. Well, one can only say that any real search always produces strange products which, coming in a period of inanity, seem shocking in comparison. The moderns of today have a far deeper understanding of the ancients, because they have as a group rejected the nicely gotten up theories of the academics and lived into the past first hand. And this is being universally recognized at present here in America.

There has been much harm done in the Church by those zealous bigots with the gift of words who make it appear anti-Christian to do anything in a modern way. It seems that one almost has to be in league with the devil to produce works involving original thought and presentation. All our Catholic periodicals are still secure in the hands of these reactionaries (possibly because there has been but little done in the arts by Catholics who also can write.)

When Catholics can stand before a modern work of art and not feel as though it were an occasion of sin, we may produce a consciousness that will demand a great Catholic art. And that Catholic art will not be Gothic, but will be produced by a consciousness very far removed from that which flowered under the Gothic or any other influence. That art will be American of American.

And may not God expect new joys when American Catholics become really Catholic—new joys, new intensities of devotion? This intense age has great religious potentialities, capable of breaking the bounds of preconceived forms and styles. Our widespread search after spiritual method and our study of the heroes of the past, their relation to their metier and their day—these accomplished, they will be our stepping-off place, or point of departure.

We are no mean people. We will do it right. We will break our pigeonholes and the hearts of our professorial experts. God has called us to far greater heights than these, and, although we have done badly by Him so far, when we really get under way we won't be so ungrateful as to pin our efforts into a convenient diaper labeled beforehand, "Gothic" or this or that. We will go the limit and seek to praise Him as He has never been praised before. We are no mean people. And haven't we better tools?

We are all aware of how the Church in France got tangled in the people's minds as Royalist on account of good Catholics, really able to write, who were profoundly convinced of the Royalist cause. How bitterly astounding to Catholics who had been lead to believe erroneously that the Royalist party was the Catholic party, to find an abbé starting a republican newspaper and making it clear to everyone inside and outside that the Catholic Church was really Catholic.

An identical situation exists today in Ireland, where the republicans—really martyrs to their beliefs—are refusing the sacraments of the Church. They will fight to their last breath, because they believe that Ireland should be a republic—and they are excommunicated because of their politics. Here, too, the all-suffering Church has to bear the odium of the stupidity of a Royalist hierarchy. These men are doubly martyrs who lay their lives down without the consolation of the sacraments; but their quarrel is not with the Church.

Let us not continue to make the mistake in, apparently, the only vehicle, The Commonweal, in which it can be rectified, of letting it appear that the Catholic art movement is reaction-

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ary. There are, no doubt, many eager souls without who would welcome the haven of Catholicism if they could only see that the Church is not reactionary, in spite of the many essayists and pamphleteers who make it appear so.

Bach survives and is beloved. Yet he was very radical in his day; and the movement that produced Bach had numerous mediocre composers whom we never hear. This same is true of all the great.

We have many mediocre modernists. There is much "ugly art," as Cram would have it. But to put all that appear to be modern into one category and say that they "deny a fundamental law" is grossly wrong and should not be tolerated editorially. It makes one blush, after telling of the Church's broadness, and that she is organic, and that The Commonweal is really the spokesman for the Catholic revival in art, to find writings so erroneously informed.

Cubism no longer exists as such, but the fundamentals utilized to produce cubism every old master utilized, and every art student knows that today—everyone but the academician. Futurism was rejected by the men who originated it as not suitable for an opaque medium like paint, and now has found its true field in the cinema where there can be negatives imposed upon one another to produce the effect of simultaneous movement. And free verse—if Mr. Cram is not careful he will impugn the Bible.

All this has been threshed out so conclusively ten or twenty years ago, that to find it here is very disconcerting to one who sees in the Church no musty impositions. Mr. Cram would have us reject the fact that we are aware now of the inherent movement of color in painting which is capable of imparting far greater reality to form conceived on canvas; he does not comprehend the fact that our color sense has advanced slightly over that of the old masters. We do not today use color merely as decoration imposed on line drawing, but as an art in itself, obeying still the same fundamental laws as revealed in Giotto, Michelangelo, El Greco and Cézanne (he, the giant of our day, and a daily attendant at Mass, a Catholic who "leant on the Pope.") Can one not praise God with color without being damned as a "modernist"?

What we must do is to open our minds, make room for these authentic moderns who inevitably seek the spiritual, but who are repelled by such ill-advised nonsense as appeared in Mr. Cram's article. These moderns have within them the potentialities that will make the Catholic revival of art possible.

Please forgive me—I am intensely interested: the name of the Mexican painter is spelled Diego Rivera, not Ribera. Ribera was an old Spanish painter. In passing, it is of interest that Rivera, who is due in San Francisco soon, although ardently anti-clerical, nevertheless recommends a study of the saints for artists.

JOHN EMMETT GERRITY.

THE DEARTH OF RELIGIOUS CARDS

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—I once read a pamphlet which foretold a deliberate campaign to withdraw all religious greeting cards from the market with the purpose of diverting the mass consciousness from the real meaning of Christmas and Easter. With this in mind I visited ten shops last December and asked at each one, "Have you any 'religious' cards?" In three of them the answer was, "No, there is no demand for them." One store had just two expensive models $.50 and $1.00 each. One man said, "We have religious calendars but no cards." One or two said, "We have Madonnas." In others I found about three of those I sought among fifty to one hundred specimens of comic, scenic or gastric greetings, and in one place in three books of samples there were just four religious pictures. But in two very small shops I saw what I was looking for. One had a table filled with lovely scenes of the Nativity. I asked if they were selling and the owner said, "Splendidly! and everyone seems so glad to find them."

Obviously busy people take what comes easily and many fall under the lure of snow scenes and jolly groups of merry-makers. "It is not that people are irreligious," one proprietor explained to me, "but you see they just send greetings for the season."

What season? A vision of icicles and sleigh bells rose before me and I wondered if the remark was any more pathetic than it is for Catholics to send Christmas greetings with the Christ Child left out. If there is a studied direction behind the dearth of religious cards, are we not at least partly accountable for its success? I should like to hear the opinion of some of your readers on the subject.

ANNE SQUIRE.

WHY?

Crafton, Pa.

TO the Editor:—The Catholic Church owes neither apology nor explanation to Mr. Short for its "truculent attitude toward the Eighteenth Amendment, and the crusade which ushered it in."

As a life-long total abstainer, I have only condemnation for intemperance. None but a moron, however, will claim that the Eighteenth Amendment has lessened intemperance. It closed the public saloon only to open the private doggery, which is infinitely worse. Under the old law it was hard for minors or women to obtain liquor. It might mean the forfeiting of the license. The present dispensers regard neither age nor sex.

Before prohibition, carrying a flask by high school boys and girls was unheard of, and unthinkable. Today it is quite the fashion. A youth recently gave as reason for not taking the total abstinence pledge that he could not attend the high school dances without bringing whisky. As to the "crusade" which ushered in the "noble experiment," the less said about that disgraceful lobby the better for the country's fair name. The same applies to the "crusade" of enforcing the Volstead law.

"Truculent attitude," while high-sounding and catchy, only faintly expresses the contempt of the majority of American citizens for this piece of pharisaism and hypocrisy. It was conceived in iniquity, born in sin, and it thrives on lies and false pretenses. In this Mr. Short may find the "why," the "just why," of the attitude of many periodicals toward the thing that some humorists call prohibition.

REV. WILLIAM C. KELTY.

MASSACHUSETTS, THERE SHE IS!

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—In my article, Massachusetts, There She Is!, in The Commonweal of September 25, I gave Senator David I. Walsh a vote of 448,000 at the last election. The figures were given me by one whom I believed to be the highest authority on that subject. Since then I have received different figures from a still higher authority, and must believe them to be correct. According to this authority Mr. Walsh's vote totaled 818,055.

CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON.

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BOOKS

Blake the Philosopher

Blake and Modern Thought, by Denis Saurat. New York: The Dial Press. $4.00.

"BLAKE'S peculiar usefulness in our time is in his power of synthesis, or at least in his desire for synthesis. . . . In the human spirit, he attempts a synthesis of reason, imagination, passion and instinct. Let us mention, to make clear the magnitude of the attempt, that Milton was concerned fundamentally only with two, reason and passion, and that most writers of the romantic school, from Byron to Verlaine, rarely grasped more than one of these states, generally not reason; that Victor Hugo, intellectually the most advanced of Blake's successors, could only bring three into his synthesis, namely, reason, imagination and instinct. . . . That synthesis which is impossible to philosophy Blake has, occasionally, achieved it [*sic*] in his poetry. Hence his greatness, and his permanent value."

These words of Professor Saurat taken from his final chapter represent the mature and reasoned judgment of one of the most distinguished contemporary critics of English literature. As a further proof of Blake's philosophic importance to the modern world, though not deduced by M. Saurat, let me mention the great enthusiasm of Swinburne (1868), of M. Berger (1907), of Mr. S. Foster Damon (1924), of Messrs. Sloss and Wallis (1926), of Mr. Max Plowman (1927), and of M. Saurat himself. It might be well, then, before turning to the book under review, to ask What does Blake, the philosopher-poet, teach the world and us?

Blake assures us that God the Creator, Urizen ("your reason") created the world. It was an evil deed, for creation meant division: the unity of God was split; matter and spirit, which are really one, were separated; and the Creation was the Fall both of Man and of God. God the Creator—reason, the adversary, the usurper—to maintain his sway, imposed on the world the laws of nature and on man the bondage of the Ten Commandments. In justice to Urizen, however, we should note that he is not altogether given over to wickedness, but possesses some quite admirable traits. But there is another, and eventually, greater God—Los ("Sol," or Phoebus the inspirer of poets). He is desire, energy, the poetic intuition, the true God who is also a man. This man who is God is the opponent of the Creator. He is the antinomian Christ par excellence, who overturns and smashes the tablets of the Law and frees mankind from such tyrannies as chastity, holiness, humility and obedience. The highest attribute of Los is mercy; hence he loves to forgive sins; hence sins are necessary that the God Los can exercise this his highest faculty. However, since division is error, final salvation depends upon the uniting of all forces now at war. Urizen the Creator must mingle with and become one with Los who is man; matter must unite and become one with spirit; all things whatsoever must join together and become one with Los-Urizen. But until this blessed consummation be realized, conflicts must be waged; otherwise, how can there be any real progress?

This, I fully realize, is incomplete and far too summary and probably not strictly accurate, but, as a bare outline of the more important portions of Blake's philosophy, it will do to dispel any silly doubt as to Blake's "peculiar usefulness in our time." And now let us take refuge in M. Saurat's book. It devotes itself almost exclusively to indicating some of the sources of Blake's ideas, including not only his Manichaean revolt against dogma, morality and reason and his pantheism akin to that of the Gnostics, the Cabalists and the Hindoos; but for the first time, so far as I am aware, fully explains the poet's amazing statement that "Adam was a Druid, and Noah also" in terms of British archaeological and ethnical research carried on quite seriously during Blake's lifetime. Then, as if to vindicate the second half of the title, M. Saurat mentions Nietzsche several times and draws a comparison between Blake and Proust—for who could represent modern thought better than Proust?

For a proper appreciation of Blake's poetry I would make two recommendations: One, the replacing on their library shelves of all expositions of Blake's philosophy with the exception of Miss White's brilliant analysis and just summary of his mysticism, published at Madison, 1927; and, two, the reading and rereading aloud of the heaven-sent lyrics, especially those of the two Songs, and the purple passages of rhetoric scattered throughout the Prophetic Books. It is here, and not in his philosophy, that whatever is of "permanent value" in Blake is to be found.

CORTLANDT VAN WINKLE.

The Case of Maurras

La fin d'une Mystification, by A. Lugan. Paris: Librairie Valois. 15 francs.

AMONG the numerous French books which have appeared as a result of the Holy See's condemnation of the Action Française, the present volume, by a distinguished priest who has long been an expert critic of the movement, is especially noteworthy. Its first part traces the history of the Action Française from its foundation in 1899, in connection with the Dreyfus case, as a means of fighting all upholders of the accused captain's innocence. Under the influence of Charles Maurras, the organization became anti-democratic and monarchistic in the most absolute sense. It soon enlisted the sympathies of those Catholics who regarded the republic as a diabolical and usurpatory régime. Maurras was himself an apostate from the Faith, but promised to defend the Church against Jews, Protestants, freemasons and democrats. He posed as the champion of political and religious orthodoxy against the "Catholiques ralliés," such as Pion and the Christian Democrats, who had, in accordance with the instructions of Leo XIII, wholeheartedly accepted the republic. Such Catholics had thenceforth the anguish of beholding an atheist and personal enemy of Christ hailed as the chief bulwark of religion by many of their fellow-Catholics.

In 1908, at the request of an eminent prelate, the author of the present volume wrote a book to prove that the doctrines of Maurras and his associates were agnostic, immoral and unchristian. Others wrote in similar vein, but friends of the Action Française among the higher clergy hastened to implore Pius X not to condemn the movement, and the Pope consented not to publish the decree of the Congregation of the Index, which had been passed in 1912 against the works of Maurras.

The wave of nationalism caused by the great war was highly favorable to the Action Française. Catholics, clerical and lay, flocked to its banners, to await the imminent advent of the monarchy. It dominated practically the entire Catholic press, one monthly periodical (Le Mouvement, founded in 1923) being its sole opponent. In 1923 there also appeared a pamphlet attacking the obscene novels of Léon Daudet, "defender of order and morals," and Maurras's chief collaborator. Two years later a Belgium Catholic newspaper showed, as the result

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of an investigation, that Maurras was far and away the favorite leader of Catholic youth. A campaign against the Action Française was begun among Belgian Catholics. M. Passelecq, editor of La Libre Belgique, arraigned, in a widely distributed pamphlet, the fundamental opposition between the Maurrasian doctrines and Christian principles.

In August, 1926, the Action Française was publicly reprimanded by Cardinal Audrieu, archbishop of Bordeaux, for its errors concerning God, the Church, morals and sociology. Pope Pius XI, after repeatedly endorsing the French prelate's stand, solemnly condemned the organization in his consistorial allocution of December 20. The Action Française, influenced by certain misguided members of the regular clergy, refused to submit, maintaining that the Pope had acted from merely political motives. In the midst of these events, Father Le Floch, superior of the French Seminary in Rome, and Cardinal Billot, resigned their positions. Severe penalties were imposed by ecclesiastical authority on the Action Française, which became more and more rebellious, so that its organ can now be described in the words of the bishop of Strassburg, as "the most anti-clerical paper in France."

After relating the amazing history of the movement, the Abbé Lugan proceeds, in the second part of his book, to analyze Le Chemin de Paradis, Maurras's volume of stories republished in 1920. The work is shown to conceal under its allegories a doctrine more materialistic and degrading than paganism at its worst. According to Maurras, all religions are the inventions of poets; the ideal of perfect happiness is a foolish one; our dreams create God; and suicide is the only remedy for our troubles. Immortality is treated as an absurd idea; slavery is extolled, and Christian charity is belittled.

In the third section of his book, M. Lugan traces, from the time of Louis XVIII to the present, those currents in French Catholicism which paved the way for the Action Française. He tells how many Catholics, forgetful alike of the Gospels and of their own best traditions, exploited the Church in accordance with their political prejudices. The efforts of men like Lacordaire, Ozanam, and Prou were as powerless against the prevailing trend as were those of Pope Leo XIII. The revolt of the Action Française was the logical climax of the whole sorry story.

Much of the material contained in the closing chapters and in the first part of this remarkable book has appeared in articles contributed by the author to the Catholic World and the Dublin Review. It is to be hoped that an American publisher will soon give us in book form the translation of at least these parts of a work so rich in lessons for us all.

T. Lawrason Riggs.

Mr. Larsson's Achievement

O City, Cities, by R. Ellsworth Larsson. New York: Payson and Clarke, Limited. $2.50.

I WILL risk a prophecy about Mr. Larsson's verse; that when, as is inevitable, ninety-nine hundredths of contemporary verse is forgotten, the princes of posterity will still be reading with delight at least two of the poems contained in this volume, namely, the title poem, O City, Cities, and the concluding Epistle for Spring.

At first glance, Mr. Larsson appears to be an improvisateur and to be singing with the careless rapture of the thrush—or rather, in view of a predominantly tragic mood, of the nightingale. Both the form, as printed, suggests free rhythm, and the many explicit musical directions appear to confirm the impression that Mr. Larsson's structure depends upon inspiration. But after several readings of, and, much more important, several delicate listenings to, Mr. Larsson's major poems, one begins to realize that the air of natural improvisation is art's last touch to art, and that, in fact, Mr. Larsson is exceedingly conscious both of what he is doing and of why he is doing it. Naturally he does not himself provide the reader with a key, nor are we entitled to expect from him confirmation even of a correct interpretation; but I should be much surprised if the following guess at his meaning should prove to be wide of the truth.

In the first place, Mr. Larsson has obviously steeped himself in the spirit of Anglo-Saxon poetry. Without the least sign of pedantry or even of scholarship, he has very unobtrusively and as if unaware of it, resumed where unhappily, thanks to foreign influences, they were left for dead, certain extremely promising beginnings of rhythms, assonances and internal rhymes which Anglo-Saxon poetry manifested. The result for the trained and attentive ear is a mellifluousness not Italianate, but of an English that may be said to be the flower that never bloomed of the original Anglo-Saxon root. Passages in proof of this are naturally too long to quote here. Were they quotable, indeed, we might suspect the author of mannerism. But the following passage taken almost at random from the poem, Epistle for Spring contains sufficient evidence to give color at least to this judgment:

> "So are your eyes
> upon me: . . .
> that the ways
> gone gone and the way I go globe perfectly this wry
> unguided flesh that wanders blindly to the worm
> unless your eye upon me makes me whole
> of old old seasons and the years there's only
> token of in windy wilderness all dry and barren
> where one leaf hangs—"

But Mr. Larsson, except in his stride, is not an apostle of an Anglo-Saxon renaissance in poetry. Certainly his profoundest sources are to be found in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, but his stream has received many tributaries before arriving at its present expression. The continuation of the foregoing passage, for instance, is pure imagism.

> "where one leaf hangs—
> a tongue
> for winds to toll and jangle in my ears"

So also are such phrases as

> *"Listen*
> it is the past
> that screams upon the wind
> tomorrow's
> destination:"

and

> "and watch the darkness
> under trees
> sniff wavering footprints
> day had left:"

Again, even in the passage I have quoted for another purpose, and much more elsewhere, there is evidence of a still later influence in the repetition of single words like "gone gone" and "old old." I could even cite passages that derive from

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Whitman and Blake. But with all this richness of contemporary and traditional coloration, subordinated to a tone indubitably Anglo-Saxon, there is nevertheless nothing imitative in Mr. Larsson's verse. He has wished to remain and he remains completely individual and inimitable.

Mr. Larsson has been at pains to stress the musical character of his poetry. His excessive use of musical terms, not in the text itself but in the margins and titles, is obviously due to apprehension lest the modern ear, unless expressly warned, may fail to hear the rhythms, assonances and rhymes of his verse or to read it as he intends. It is highly probable, nor should I personally be hopeful that even with every warning and appeal before them, more than one reader in two will at once appreciate all the subtleties of the unheard melodies of his verse. They can begin, however, with the Chorale for practice and essay the major poems later. The Chorale opens thus:

"And I have heard the voices
over roofs
rising and falling—
curve and return of calling—
and a song
like flags of lagging light
curled and unfurled
and purling in the mind"

A. R. ORAGE.

Fables of Savagery

Barbarian Stories, by Naomi Mitchison. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company. $2.50.

ARISTOTLE said, so Mrs. Mitchison reminds us, that among friends there is no need of justice; but as one grows older, she adds, it seems less and less likely that there will ever be a world of friends, any more than there will ever be a world of Aristotles. This consideration will serve as well as another for the unifying thread on which the variegated jewels of Barbarian Stories hang. Almost without exception, these are gory chronicles. Their background is conquest and rapine, with the qualities of tenderness, mercy and understanding glimmering here and there, in the soul of a woman, of a slave, of a boy who has suffered. The dating of the final tale in 1935 has abundant implications.

Parallel to the straightforward stream of narration runs a subtler current of mysticism. The very first of the stories exhibits this dualism. A Bronze-Age Briton who, out of envy, injures the barley crop of a more prosperous neighbor, falls off a cliff running before an imaginary pack of wolves, evoked, shall we say by conscience, or is it tribal magic? The overtones of the unknown are struck again in Mascaret, where a Roman officer in ancient Gaul saves the little son of a chief from being sacrificed in a Druid ceremony, only to find that he has antagonized the whole tribe, including the boy's father. We see the Roman, civilized, humane, facing the crowd—"the savage, insane eyes of the worshipers whose God had failed." Maiden Castle, once again, concerns a Druid secret. In the course of a morning ride, three Romans—one of them, a ten-year-old boy, capitally done—stumble upon a mysterious town site where there is no town. There is a gesture of surly British self-sufficiency under the very nose of the conquerors, a hint of prophecy, of hidden machinations.

In form the stories range from the most intimate personal revelations, reflecting under high focus the mores of an entire age, to the hero-tale or saga, dripping with blood and booty.

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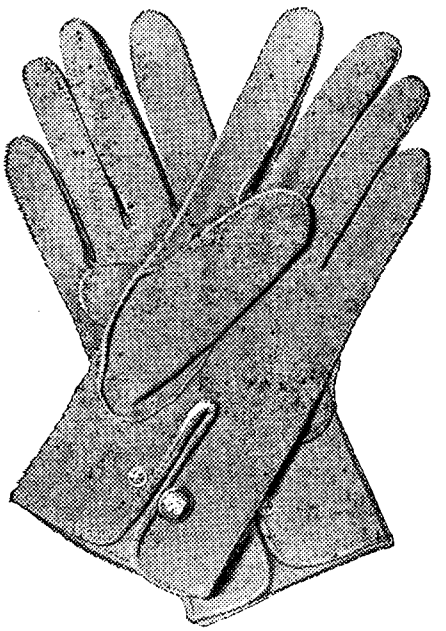

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Sacred Art

A Series of Lectures

The tremendous influence of religion on arts and letters is a fact which now is being recognized as one of the most hopeful trends of the age. The ignorance regarding "mediaevalism" which prevailed until recently is now being dispelled. The new knowledge concerning this subject, once confined to specialists, is now being made accessible to the cultured public. There is a demand for a comprehensive treatment of the sisterhood that existed, and still exists, between religion, arts, and letters.

The Pius X School of Liturgical Music in consequence of its recognition of this need, announces a course of public lectures on the History of Sacred Art. The schedule is as follows:—

Introductory	**Professor Edward Kennard Rand, Harvard University.**	**Oct. 25**
Liturgical Drama	**Professor Karl Young, Yale University.**	**Nov. 1** **Nov. 15**
Rubrics	**Rev. T. Lawrason Riggs, Chaplain Catholic Club, Yale University.**	**Dec. 6** **Dec. 20**
Architecture	**Ralph Adams Cram**	**Jan. 17** **Jan. 31**
Sacred Painting	**Bancel La Farge**	**Feb. 14** **Feb. 28**
Sacred Literature	**Rev. Cornelius Clifford**	**Mar. 14** **Mar. 28**
Liturgical Music	**Mrs. Justine B. Ward**	**Apr. 11** **Apr. 25**

The Lectures will be given at the Pius X Hall, 130th Street and Convent Avenue on the dates mentioned above at 4.00 P.M. Since the capacity of the hall is limited to approximately 400 seats early application for tickets is advisable.

Subscription for Course, $25.00

Application may be made to The Director of the Pius X School of Liturgical Music, Telephone Cathedral 1334—or to The Commonweal, Suite 4622, Grand Central Terminal, New York City, Telephone Murray Hill 8581.

One at least, Niempsor Kar is a pure fairy tale. Always there is that direct and vivid presentation characteristic of Mrs. Mitchison's work. There are no veils between us and these people of remote places and ages. The author's mind interposes no colored gauze of prejudice or prettification. It is like window glass, through which we see for ourselves the actual happenings.

Possibly the best story is A Matter of No Importance, which describes how a Roman contemporary of Caesar, having made up his mind to a mercenary marriage for the sake of political advancement, finds too late that he has given up the things he really cares about. Some, however, might prefer The Konung of White Walls, which, with Oh Gay Are the Garlands, relates the wild adventures and carousals of Norse mercenaries in Russia and Constantinople, a thousand years ago.

In her descriptions of action, Mrs. Mitchison is a man. She shrinks from nothing—neither lust nor cruelty; but when she writes of the emotions she becomes all woman. It is this combination of candor and delicacy, perhaps, that gives her work its strength and freshness.

The Barbarian Stories are slighter than the earlier collection, When the Bough Breaks, but Mrs. Mitchison may be sure at any time of a gratified and admiring audience.

SENTA JONAS RYPINS.

Unusual Biography

Goethe, by Jean Marie Carré; translated from the French by Eleanor Hard. New York: Coward McCann, Incorporated. $3.00.

Memoirs of Lorenzo da Ponte; translated with an introduction and notes by L. A. Sheppard. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.00.

GOETHE is not a figure possible of compression into a short biography; a bare relation of facts is of course utterly inadequate to give a living portrait of the man, while the interpretation of his genius and his work can be successfully attempted only in a book of monumental proportions. Of course the feat has been tried again and again; Herr Ludwig was the latest to enter the lists, and brilliant journalist though he is he found it a task beyond his powers. M. Carré, however, at once disarms this criticism in the preface of his book by stating that he proposes "simply to let the reader see the various stages and the more characteristic scenes of his life, leaving aside all questions of philosophic or aesthetic interpretation." His work therefore is scarcely more than an outline of Goethe's life, with certain moments such as his Italian journey, his friendship with Schiller, his meeting with Napoleon, and his love for Christina Vulpius, thrown into relief in the manner of the prevailing school of imaginative biography. For those who desire a quick and sympathetic survey of Goethe's life and chief works it is excellent reading, but beyond this it is scarcely important enough to call for serious comment.

The Memoirs of Lorenzo da Ponte is a book of a very different kind. Its interest lies in the fact that it is a most amusing human document, though amusing where its author least intended it to be. Da Ponte tries to make himself out to be both a genius and a misunderstood hero, when in reality he was only an entertaining rascal, one of those Italian poetasters, adventurers and liars of the late eighteenth century. These memoirs, here for the first time translated into English, are an amusing record of the foibles, vanities, and pretensions of a hack writer who had the good fortune to furnish three workmanlike librettos for one of the world's supreme musical

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geniuses—Don Giovanni, Le Nozze di Figaro, and Cosi Fan Tutti. Because his name was thus coupled with that of Mozart, he has obtained a certain sort of immortality.

Yet the man himself is a delight to those interested in the human comedy. In his introduction Mr. Sheppard shows the difference between the real Da Ponte and the portrait painted in the Memoirs. In reality the librettist was a decidedly shabby and shady figure, redeemed only by a certain theatrical and poetic flair and a superabundant vitality. But he depicts himself as a romantic figure, whose success in love rivaled that of Casanova, and whose downfall was due solely to the malevolence of rivals jealous of his genius. By a supreme stroke of irony this child of eighteenth-century Venice passsed his last days in New York as professor of Italian literature in Columbia College, a position which he owed to his American protector, Clement Moore, the author of The Night Before Christmas.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Contemporary Lions

Portraits and Reflections, by Stuart Hodgson. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $2.50.

THE brilliant Englishman who executed these miniatures of contemporary celebrities finds his subjects in England, France, Cuba, Italy and the United States. Though most of them are eminent in politics, others gained fame in business, in literature and even in chess. Mr. Hodgson is a master of a rapid, vivid and economical style and of a gift for seizing upon the salient characteristics of his people.

These thumb-nail portraits are always brilliant even though Mr. Hodgson finds Lady Astor a bit elusive and Mussolini beyond the confines of his sympathies. His Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, J. M. Keynes, Lord Birkenhead and Sir John Simon are vital and have an unmistakably authentic air, and his Alfred Emmanuel Smith is astonishingly fine. "At his best," he says, "Mr. Smith can strike a note as high and dignified as Mr. Wilson ever did: and it is a much more human note." Again, "He was not merely a personality: he was a type—the first real champion of the new American democracy. . . . I doubt if any will ever arise of greater native ability, courage and sincerity."

Mr. Hodgson is always happy and sometimes epigrammatic in his comparisons of the outstanding figures in the English political firmament—sure proof that he knows their secrets and for what they stand. "Mr. Snowden is a principle, Mr. MacDonald is an attitude and Mr. Henderson is an institution: but Mr. Thomas is a man." Lord Birkenhead's secret is revealed in a sentence: "With one little spark of idealism he might have been, and probably would have been, one of the greatest men of all time. But the spark is not there." Insight of a similarly high order marks his summary of that stormy petrel of English politics, Winston Churchill: "Roll as it may, this stone can never find its real niche. He is always odd man out. And for that reason the most masterful of men will continue to be the instrument of others: and one of the most ambitious men that ever lived be beaten in the race, with all his splendid qualities, by men who in almost every respect are far his inferiors."

The striking omission in Mr. Hodgson's book is Ramsay MacDonald. Sidelights are, however, shed upon the Premier and one gathers that he is no favorite with the author. Portraits and Reflections is a shrewd and brilliant little book, especially appealing to those interested in English politics.

JOSEPH J. REILLY.

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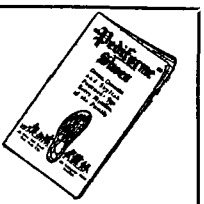

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Briefer Mention

Leaves from the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic, by Reinhold Neihuhr. Chicago: Willett, Clark and Colby. $2.00.

THE author of this book, a former minister in Detroit, is not a cynic, even a tamed one. He is a persistent and sometimes disconcerting inquirer who sees in Detroit a microcosm of contemporary America and who asks himself at every turn how the Protestant church is going to make the "inevitable compromise" between the "rigor of her ideals" and the "dominant interests and prejudices of our industrial civilization." Sensitive of mind and heart he pours into his notes his shrewd observations, his questionings, his anxieties, his irritations at the ignoble compromises going on about him, and while he combats the sense of futility which at times assails him, he clings manfully to the hope that a way will be found to unite men spiritually as they are "united mechanically."

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